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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

IS THIS REALLY GOODBYE? President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo waves after what is supposed to be her last State of the Nation Address at the Batasan complex in Quezon City on Monday

SONA HIGHLIGHTS

IN HER NINTH STATE OF THE NATION Address (Sona), President Macapagal-Arroyo boosted on her administration's economic achievements, saying the economy posted uninterrupted growth for 32 quarters and more than doubled its size to P186 billion during her 8 1/2 years in power.

• She said her fiscal measures protected the economy from the global downturn, tamed inflation, created 8 million jobs and reduced by 2 million the number of poor people in the country. Road-centered infrastructure were also built and unfinished ones completed.

• She disclosed plans to improve revenue collection and impose higher taxes on tobacco and alcohol to finance more education projects and health services.

• On the issue of security, she described as "good" prospects for peace talks with communist and Moro rebels.

No clear GMA goodbye

'She is longest burning President'

By Inquirer Staff and Inquirer Bureaus

RAIN SOAKED A 12-FOOT EFFIGY of a sleeping President Macapagal-Arroyo on a full-throats hullabaloo running over the Constitution, but militants nonetheless sent the protest counterpiece up in flames on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City before the joint of her State of the Nation Address (Sona).

"She's the longest burning President. Gusto talaga manatili sa pwesto! (She really wants to keep her post)" Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza joked, as protesters repeated lighting up the bulls-

SHE IS THE LONGEST A9

PROTESTERS parade an effigy of President Macapagal-Arroyo as they march along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City on Monday. MARI LANUZA

Recycled gowns back in fashion

By Christine O. Avendaño and Cathy Yamsuan

BARE BACK, LOW-CUT AND RECycled. Hand-loom provided lawmakers and their spouses to dress less or dress windy for yesterday's State of the Nation Address (Sona).

This was apparent in the gowns worn by Senators Loren Legarda and Miriam Defensor who decided to "recycle" their gowns.

RECYCLED? A16

Amid Sona, Cory on their minds

By Christine O. Avendaño

WHILE THOUSANDS RALLIED AT THE venue in fuchsia as she delivered her State of the Nation Address, other Filipinos on the other side of the metropolis were pouring out their love for another woman who lay sleeping in bed quietly battling cancer.

The women in the reddish pink gown was President Macapagal-Arroyo, target of abuse by protesters outside the Batasang Pambansa. The other woman, known for her battle color of yellow, was Corazon Aquino and the cancer cells that had bloomed in her colon had metastasized.

"The cancer has spread to other areas... There is pain generated in so many areas,"

AMID SONA A9

She says she has much to do before term ends

By TJ Burgonio

IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's last State of the Nation Address (Sona), but she made no clear declaration she was ready to hand over the reins of power to a successor on June 30, 2010.

In her ninth Sona before a joint session of Congress, a fighting Ms Arroyo declared that her term would end in 2010.

"At the end of this speech, I shall step down from this rostra," she said, pausing. Then she added, smiling: "But not from the presidency." This drew applause from the mostly pro-Arroyo audience in the session hall and gallery of the House of Representatives.

"My term does not end until noon of next year. Until then, I will fight for the ordinary Filipino. The nation comes first. There is much to do as head of state—to the very last day," she said.

A broad spectrum of society has accused Ms Arroyo of plotting to keep her grip on power beyond 2010 either through the House-initiated Charter change or midnight appointments.

Aided by a PowerPoint presentation, videos and human props, and interrupted by over 100 rounds of applause, Ms Arroyo declared that she "never expressed the desire to extend myself beyond my term."

"Many of those who accuse me of it tried to cling like nails, to their posts," she said.

She, however, gave no categorical word she was committed to a smooth turnover of power in June 2010.

NO CLEAR A6

It's very clear, she's stepping down after her term—Mike A

FIRST GENTLEMAN JOSE MIGUEL Arroyo thought his wife was categorical enough.

"Of course. It's very clear. She's stepping down after her term," the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo said after her State of the Nation Address (Sona) yesterday.

Boxing pound-for-pound superstar Manny Pacquiao, who received a glowing tribute from Ms Arroyo and rose from his seat to acknowledge it several times, thought so, too. "Malinaw na malinaw (It is very clear). Grabe! Jelo also."

So did US Ambassador Kristie Kenney.

IT'S VERY A6

FORMER Vice President Teofisto Guingona clenches his fist as he addresses protesters along Commonwealth Avenue.

Sona live: Reporters' and readers' twitbook

By JV Rufino
PDI Director for Multi

TWEETS SLAMMED, SLANTED, OBSERVED and vivisected—and reinterred away as history unfolded.

The Internet yesterday used the online social networking service Twitter for a blow-by-blow account of President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona).

The coverage provided details with speed and immediacy not usually achieved in traditional media—from

SONA LIVE A16

9 YEARS OF GMA: A REVIEW

Final grade: Most PDI readers say she 'has done little or none at all'

By Lawrence de Guzman
Inquirer Research

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO "has done little or none at all."

This is the response from the majority of readers who answered a questionnaire printed in the Inquirer about the performance of Ms Arroyo in her 8 1/2 years of rule in Malacañang.

Called "State of the Nation 2009—GMA's Final Grade," the Inquirer asked readers to grade the performance of the President in addressing five national concerns: fighting graft and corruption, reducing poverty, keeping peace and order, enforcing the law equally and delivering social services.

Ms Arroyo's lowest mark was on addressing graft and corruption, with 91.5 percent of respondents saying she has done little or nothing at all.

The President's highest mark was on the delivery of social services, with 14.4 percent saying she has done well.

She got negative net ratings (the difference between the "has-done-well"

FINAL A6

DENR assails 'purist' ideas of environmentalists

By Nikko Dizon

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONment and Natural Resources (DENR) yesterday assailed the "purist" ideas of environmentalists who claimed the mining industry under President Macapagal-Arroyo had wreaked havoc on the environment.

DENR SLAMS A6

Local governance: Reform stalled by partisan politics

By Alex B. Brillantes Jr.

PARTISAN POLITICS OVER REFORM has characterized the actions of the Arroyo administration on local governance over the past nine years.

This was particularly demonstrated by the way the administration has marshaled the association of local governments to its defense during the various crises of legitimacy it has faced.

This is in marked contrast to the lack of urgency shown by the administration in dealing with the many bills pending in Congress calling for governance reforms.

Our consultations with local executives around the country show their chief concerns to be excessive political partisanship, centralization and lack of resources. These may be attributable to the governance style of the central government, the Arroyo administration being no exception.

It will be recalled that during the "Hello Garci" farce of 2005 and the each handout sounded in Mala-

LOCAL A6

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

EZ2 SUERTRES

FOUR DIGIT

MEGALOTTO 6/45
18 20 33 39 33 45
P13,442,083.20

JPE vows to lead fight vs Cha-cha

Polls will be held next year, he also assures

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

HOURS BEFORE THE President's State of the Nation Address yesterday, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile assured his colleagues that he would lead the resistance to any attempt by the lower house to convene Congress into a constituent assembly (Con-ass) to amend the Constitution.

At the opening of the third regular session of the Senate at 10 a.m., Enrile delivered a speech in which he unequivocally vowed to oppose any unconstitutional moves to push Charter change (Cha-cha).

Despite his assurances, only nine senators (Enrile included) were seen attending the floor at the Batasang Pambansa in Quezon City yesterday afternoon.

Enrile, who is allied with the administration, said: "No Charter change will take place without the participation of the Senate."

"I have vowed to protect the independence and integrity of the Senate, and I will do so within the powers granted to me under the Constitution and our rules," he said, to the delight of both the administration and opposition blocs in the chamber.

"Those who wish to make the face of anger and distrust among our people should think deep and hard. To move on revoking on this dangerous path is at the very least a distraction from one more important tasks, and at most an invitation to a political storm which our country cannot afford at this critical juncture," he said.

He said the senators were also "strongly cautioned" in entering that election would be held next year.

"In those who wish to provoke further distrust and turmoil in the land by advancing their own agenda, I say that the Philippine Senate will stand firm and steadfast in performing its duty to safeguard and preserve our liberties, our democratic rights, and our political constitution," he said.

Minority Sen. Francis Pangilinan earlier took the floor to instead file position that the joint session have to the day or the Senate should not be used to convene Congress in to a constituent assembly.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon stood up and reiterated that he would immediately leave the joint session "if the proceeding is diverted to another purpose."

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, on the other hand, stood up to say that there was an agenda for the senators to walk out of the session hall, the bonds being, after all, "super" to the House."

"Why walk out? We should demand that the lower house should walk out because we have the superior right to the Congress. Why should we become silent, deaf, mute and dumb in light of the 'pro-mantra'?" Santiago said, eliciting laughter from her colleagues.

Senator Ejercito Estrada, 71, asserted, however, that he believes senators he need not walk out because in the first place he did not intend to go.

Hearing all this, Enrile said that any motion by the House to convene a Con-ass "will be out of order."

At the last minute, Sen. Manuel Villar said he and his wife, Las Piñas City Rep. Cynthia Villar, would not attend the State of the Nation Address (SONA) because they would be attending the launching of his then-nascent Nacionalista Party.

House had numbers to convene Con-ass but didn't—Nograles

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Leila Salaverria

THERE WERE MORE THAN enough lawmakers present to convene a Government Assembly (Con-ass), Speaker Prospero Nograles said yesterday, but the session that heard the President's State of the Nation Address was not the proper venue to do so.

Nograles said reporters that he had to first meet with leaders of the House before making any move to convene a Con-ass.

He noted that 211 legislators were on hand for the opening of the session yesterday morning, more than enough to get the majority vote needed to convene a Con-ass. Just 10 votes shy of the 221 votes needed to make amendments to the Constitution.

In his speech at the opening of the House session, Nograles stressed the importance of House Resolution 1109, which proposes to convene a Con-ass even without the participation of the Senate, and the need to make it the focus of political debates.

"I say that, once and for all, we do our assets—in a climate of civil, decent and responsible dialogue—we can establish firmly the solid needs to implement changes or revisions that our people want in our Constitution," Nograles said.

Nograles and other congressmen hope that by convening a Con-ass, the Supreme Court would be forced to make a ruling on the proper mode of amending the Constitution.

"I am certain that, in the end, the people's will shall prevail as to what changes, as well as how and when changes shall be made, in our fundamental law. The abiding challenge of leadership is to do what is right and necessary, braving unchanted waters, risking ravaging by those who do not share our convictions in God-fearing direction of social reform," Nograles said.

Nograles also pointed for a more powerful Congress as it began its 1st regular session before the 2010 elections, calling on his colleagues to use the budget hearings to demand accountability from the implementing government agencies and institutions.

"We need to expand further the reach of our oversight activities, and I invite you to use the forthcoming budget deliberations to make legislative oversight as effective means to make the executive agencies and its instrumentalities account for their performances in the use of their budgetary allocations," he said.

Palace: Washington Times has ties to JDV

By TJ Burgonio

MALACAÑANG SAID YESTERday it "found surprised" by the Washington Times' scathing editorial about the forthcoming meeting between United States President Barack Obama and President Macapagal-Arroyo, saying the paper's editor has ties to administration aide Rep. Jose de Venecia.

"The paper is just being consistent with being critical of the US President as it is right-leaning, being owned as it is by the Moonies," Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said in a text message.

The "Moonies" is an influential and derogatory term for the members of the Unification Church, a conservative Christian group led by Korean Sun Myung Moon.

Remonde also said the paper's editorial director, Jimmy Dorrier, is the brother of Jet Dorrier and was framed "in favor of the Philippine opposition."

In its July 26 editorial, titled "Obama: The Skeptic," the Washington Times said giving Mr Arroyo the honor of being the first Southeast Asian leader to visit the White House on July 30 was a "holdover" because Obama "was being used to give political cover" for her troubles back home.

The editorial said Ms Arroyo's miserable political position was precarious, and went on to cite her low approval rating and growing opposition to administration street protests "in response to a dubious scandals following a deep 1986 election and numerous allegations of corruption against her family and administration."

The editorial also noted moreover human rights violations in the country among them the killing of journalists and opposition leaders.

"On top of all this are media-related by Ms Arroyo to cling to power," it said.

The Washington Times reasoned, however, that the relationship between Washington and Manila was an "old and important one" and that the current Visiting Forces Agreement between the two countries allows US troops on Philippine soil to help in the war on terrorism."

Surigao radioman shot dead

BUTUAN CITY—ARMEN killed gunmen shot dead a radio broadcaster in Bayugan, Surigao del Sur, the second media personality to be murdered in the Caraga region this year.

Senior Supt. Nestor Fajura, Caraga police spokesperson, identified the victim as Gerardo de Leon, a commentator for both Magic Lanao FM Radio in Bayugan and Radyo Natin based in nearby Prosperidad.

Fajura said Leon, 49, had just left a lodging house and was about to board his motorcycle when the gunman approached and shot him with a .45-cal pistol along the provincial road in Purok 1 at around 1:30 a.m. yesterday.

Leon died instantly from gunshot wounds in different parts of the body.

Leon's killing preceded that of barangay chief Melchor Fernández, commentator Jonathan Estolonio who was shot to death in Agusan del Sur on July 26.

"Leon was not known to be a loud-laving commentator," Fajura said, hinting his death was not likely linked to the attacks against journalists. Jennifer A.Cudiamat, Inquirer Mindanao

Ping: I can't answer complaint based on hearsay, speculation

By Christine O. Avendaño
and Jeannette I. Andrade

SEN. PANFILO "PING" LACSON SAID YESterday he would consult with his lawyers before deciding whether or not to show up on Friday for the first hearing of the Department of Justice's preliminary inquiry into the 2000 double murders of publisher Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

Lacson, noting that the DOJ has asked him to comment on the affidavits of his former police aide Cesar Mancao, said: "I don't know how to answer that when what is being thrown at me are hearsay evidence and speculations."

The DOJ issued a subpoena requiring the former national police chief to appear before Justice department officials on Friday and submit a counter-affidavit to the complaint filed by Inocs's daughters for the murder of their father and his driver.

Attached to the Dacers' complaint were the affidavits of Mancao, who has implicated Lacson and former President Joseph Estrada in the murders.

Lacson said he did not understand how the DOJ could open a preliminary inquiry based on affidavits made up of hearsay and speculations.

He branded the inquiry as "persecution, pure and simple."

"I know they will not stop until they put me away," he said, without saying who "they" were.

Lacson said the return to the Philippines of another former police aide, Glenn Dumlao, did not worry him because the three other fugitives had executed did not implicate him in the murders.

The lawyer of Dumlao, meanwhile, gave reassurances yesterday that his client was willing to testify and affirm his 2001 affidavit but would most likely decline to run for a fourth source statement.

Lawyer Moel Calloway, who visited his client at the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), said reports that Dumlao would stand by the sworn statement he executed before the Philippine National Police Intelligence Group (PNP-IG) in Camp Crame on June 12, 2001.

Video of Fil-Am at NPA camp authentic—AFP

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE MILITARY YESTERDAY CLAIMED A video showing Filipino-American activist Melissa Roxas at a communist New People's Army camp was "authentic" but its intelligence service was still studying other pieces of evidence before it comes to any conclusion.

"We analyzed the video and we found that it was authentic and that it was Roxas on the video," said Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesperson Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr. in an interview with reporters in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

Brawner was referring to a video that party-list representatives Antonio Tinio (Bayan) and Rafael Mariano (Alliance for Nationalism and Democracy) presented to media on Saturday.

Roxas, a member of the US chapter of the left-wing group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), has denied being a member of the NPA. He said the one stating the Philippines for an "unproven purpose" when the was abducted and tortured for six days in May in La Paz, Tarlac, by men she believed to be military agents.

The Commission on Human Rights is investigating her complaint.

"For us in the AFP, this is a good development because we are seeing another side of Roxas," said Brawner.

Brawner said it appeared that Bayan was taking Roxas to showcase "democratic processes" such President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address and to make the President look bad when she visits US President Barack Obama this week.

He denied that the military gave the supposed evidence to the two party-list representatives in a bid to justify Roxas' abduction and torture.

"You must remember that the AFP had nothing to do with that. There was no official order for the abduction and torture of Roxas," he said.

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Ruby Rose father-in-law files complaint vs police

By Nikko Dizon

THE FATHER-IN-LAW OF THE LATE RUBY Rose Barrameda is set to file a formal complaint in the Department of Justice against police officers who handled the murder investigation, saying their bias fueled a trial by publicity.

Ahmad Jimenez Jr., one of the suspects in the gruesome killing of Barrameda, the estranged wife of his son, told the Inquirer over the weekend that he would be filing a supplemental counter-affidavit at the DOJ today.

It will rise "police excesses, presumption of bias and trial by publicity," he said.

"The police acted, abetted and possessed no bias, and by publicity were and beyond the limits (set) and above (their duties and responsibilities," Jimenez said.

He cited instances such as when a ranking police official told the media that the credibility of Manuel Montero, the key witness in the murder case, could not be questioned, while another police officer had said the Jimenezes were a family that was "feared not respected" in Cavite.

Jimenez, a lawyer, said the Supreme Court is a ruling had taken matched approaches tasked with prosecuting crimes to be discouraged, "so that the innocent will be spared from trauma."

Jimenez also reiterated his belief that the body found in a steel drum encased in concrete that was fished out of the waters of Navotas in June was not Barrameda's.

Manuel Jimenez said his lawyer on Friday filed a motion in the DOJ seeking deferment of the case until Barrameda's death certificate could be presented to the investigating panel.

He said his family received a cop since Barrameda's death (and bill was paid in April 2007, more than two weeks after she was reported missing.

"That information is revealing. Who would pay on April 2 (after she was said to be missing on March 14 to the ordinary mind, it is enough to create doubt," Jimenez said.

THREE MEN and a woman, believed to be Abu Sayyaf members who surrendered to Deputy National Security Adviser Luis "Chavit" Singson, alight under escort from the latter's plane at a private hangar at the Manila Domestic Airport Monday. They were met by Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno. EDDIE MARIÑAS JR

4 Abus surrender to Chavit

By Julie S. Rijuda
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—FOUR SUSpected members of the Abu Sayyaf reportedly surrendered to a Cabinet official and were flown to Manila where they arrived a few hours before President Macapagal-Arroyo delivered her State of the Nation Address (SONA) at 4 p.m.

A source in the Department of Interior and Local Government said the Abu Sayyaf members—three men and a woman—surrendered to Deputy National Security Adviser Luis "Chavit" Singson.

The sources informant, who sought anonymity for lack of authority to speak on the matter, said Singson arrived in Manila on Monday just after 11 a.m. on his private plane with the four Abu Sayyaf members.

The plane reportedly went straight to a private hangar at the Manila Domestic Airport where a van met by Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno.

The sources cited in talk in Pasay to get confirmation of the surrender but a member of his staff said he was in a meeting.

The Abu Sayyaf are wanted for terrorist activities, including the abduction of civilians for money.

Zulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan said he had no information about the surrender but hoped that the matter would be settled peacefully.

"I don't have any idea about that. In fact, we just had even coordinated with me about any Abu Sayyaf members wanting to surrender to the authorities," Tan said.

Tan was in Manila to attend the President's Sona.

Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, Western Mindanao Command chief and head of Joint Task Force Comet, also didn't have a clue.

"I am in Pagadian City raising our troops. So far with turning habis operations against the military or with other security agencies for the surrender of some Abu Sayyaf members, especially Pana," Dolorfino said, referring to a leader of the same group.

OIC lauds cessation of hostilities

THE INFLUENTIAL ORGANIZAtion of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has lauded the Philippine government's decision to end military operations against Muslim insurgents in Mindanao so as to pave the way for peace talks between the two sides.

In a statement posted on the OIC website on Sunday, Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, OIC secretary general, also thanked the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) for its positive response to the government's move, which is hailed its new military mission.

Ihsanoglu said the OIC was optimistic that peace negotiations between the two parties would "resume from the point where earlier peace efforts culminated, in an effort to preserve and build upon what has been achieved in the progress."

He called on both sides to make the necessary efforts to realize security, peace and development in southern Philippines.

He also assured them of the OIC's readiness to exert all efforts in assisting both parties to achieve peace. Cynthia D. Rubio

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SEN. Pia Razon (center) seeks the President's firsthand explanation on the alleged illegal recruitment activities of Jocjoc Bolante, former head of the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Task Force, during the Senate hearing on the fertilizer fund scam. JOAN BONDOC

NGT police hold their ground as protesters try to go beyond the perimeter line set by authorities. JOAN BONDOC

AN ALLEGED intelligence agent is beaten up by protesters during an anti-Arroyo rally on Commonwealth Avenue. MARIE ALEJANDRINE D. JAMIAS

Final grade: Most PDI readers say she 'has done little or none at all'

From page A1

rating and the "has not done much/none at all" rating to fighting graft and corruption (-16.6), reducing poverty (-76.8), keeping peace and order (-62.7), enforcing the law equally (-76.7) and delivering social services (-54.3).

Readers were made to indicate in a multiple-choice format if they thought the President "has done much" or "has done little" in dealing with such national concern. They were also given the option to indicate if they were "undecided."

Running from July 20 to July 24, the nonresponsive efficient 1000 radio] responses which were sent to the Inquirer by way of text messages, e-mail and fax.

Fighting graft

A total of 905 people, or 91.4 percent of the respondents, believed that the President "has done little or none at all" in cracking corruption since she assumed office in 2001.

Only 62 people (6.9 percent) said that Ms Arroyo "has done much" in this aspect, while only 32 respondents or 3.64 percent said they were "undecided."

Reducing poverty

A total of 743 people (84.7 percent) said Ms Arroyo "has done little or none at all" in reducing poverty in the country.

Seventy-six respondents (8.6 percent) said the President "has done much" in dealing with poverty reduction. There were 58 undecided (6.7 percent) who said they were "undecided."

Keeping peace and order

A total of 653 people (74.2 percent) thought that Ms Arroyo "has done little or none at all" in pushing for peace and order in the country.

A total of 141 respondents (11.3 percent) said the President "has done much," while 126 people (14.32 percent) said they were "undecided."

Enforcing the law equally

A total of 728 people (83.8 percent) of the respondents said the President "has done little or none at all" in enforcing the law equally in the country.

Only 64 respondents (7.2 percent) said Ms Arroyo "has done much" for justice to reign supreme, while 77 (8.7 percent) were "undecided."

Social services

A total of 605 people (68.7 percent) of respondents said the President "has done little or nothing at all" to the delivery of social services.

A total of 127 respondents (14.4 percent) said Ms Arroyo "has done much," while 148 (16.8 percent) were "undecided."

The first four concerns included in the Inquirer study were adopted from the "most urgent national concerns" determined in Pulse Asia surveys from March 2007 to February 2009.

The fifth concern—delivery of social services—was included in the list by Inquirer editors.

Profile of respondents

Respondents came from different parts of the country and a few from abroad.

Respondents from Metro Manila accounted for a third of those who took part in the study, while readers from other parts of Luzon outside Metro Manila accounted for a fourth of the respondents.

Less than 7 percent came from the Visayas, and 30 percent from Mindanao.

Almost a fifth of the respondents chose not to put their location.

The remaining 4.1 percent of the respondents came from Filipinos abroad—Australia, Bahrain (1), Canada, Dubai, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan (2), the Netherlands (2), Oman, Qatar (2), Saudi Arabia (7), Singapore (3), UAE (2) United Kingdom (1), United States (10) and Vietnam.

The bulk (64.2 percent) of the responses were sent through text messages, 26.8 percent via e-mail, and 2.2 percent through fax.

Results of the study do not reflect the views of all because reaction in this only included the views of the readers who saw the questionnaire, took the time to answer it, and had access to a mobile phone, Internet or fax to send their responses.

Local governance: Reform stalled by partisan politics

From page A1

ranking in 2007, the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) and other local government leagues threw their support behind the beleaguered administration.

This was interpreted by many that local executives were simply toeing the line of the Arroyo administration. Such support must be placed within the context of the nature of local government in the country.

Patron-client relationship

Given the patron-client nature of Philippine politics, most local governments simply have no choice but to align themselves with Malacañang, otherwise they would have no access to the vital resources under the control of the President.

This has been true from the time of the Marcos administration to former President Fidel V. Ramos' Lakas, to President Macapagal-Arroyo's Kampi.

Local governments are in the best position in the long service delivery chain and, as such, feel the brunt of failure. It is within this context that their susceptibility to excessive political partisanship and willingness to play the game may be understood.

But it is critical to make a distinction between the associations of local governments and the individual local governments.

Local execs deliver

Despite all the political machinations local governments have been subjected to—par for the course in our politico-administrative system—it is to their credit that many have managed to be creative.

Evidence here are the many local governments—large and small, urban and rural, landlocked and coastal—that have delivered, in spite of the limitations brought about by lack of resources and the inertia of centralization.

We have seen innovations in local revenue resources generation, participatory governance, environmental management, peace initiatives and local service delivery. The many awardees of the Galing Pook Awards Program are a testimony to the advances made at the local level in spite of partisanship.

The numerous local governments that have entered into partnerships with the private sector and civil society to build communities through people-initiated movements, such as Gawad Kalinga, show many of them are delivering.

They have had innovative leaders, engaged citizens and a supportive business sector.

Challenges, concerns

We are not romanticizing local government. Problems of corruption and abuse plague them. They need transparency and accountability. It is within this context that reforms are imperative.

Unfortunately, reforming structures of governance has not been high on the agenda.

Local governments face many challenges and concerns. These could have been addressed by reform measures but these reforms were not an administration priority.

One reform the administration could have pursued is in the area of financial autonomy and the lack of financial resources.

Although the Internal revenue allotment (IRA) shares of local governments have been increased significantly, financial transfers are still insufficient to cover the costs of devolved functions.

Hence, the need for reforms to improve the IRA scheme, ranging from increasing the IRA shares of local governments to revising the criteria for allocation to local governments.

IRA dependency is seen as a cause for the continued dominance by the central government.

Measuring performance

Another area of reform that could have been pushed concerns accountability mechanisms, from which local governments continue to suffer.

These range from directives to local governments to implement nationally designed programs without adequate financial support, to diversion for them to pay the salaries of devolved personnel, especially health workers.

Promotion of intergovernmental cooperation could have been further pushed. It would allow local executives to join hands in addressing common issues, such as ecological, environmental, livelihood and health concerns.

To the administration's credit, advances were made in one critical area of local governance: Measuring the performance of local governments.

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) has developed a performance monitoring system that provides a platform for the improvement of IRA sharing and evaluation of local governments.

The business sector and NGOs have also weighed in by monitoring the competitiveness and business friendliness of local governments.

Political reforms

The administration could have also pushed for meaningful political reforms, including the issues of the term of local officials. Three years is too short for a single term. A consistent 4-year term limit is needed to address this.

Other reforms concern the need to reexamine the barangay as a political unit.

One possible reform is the merger of barangays that have shown themselves to be economically unviable. Another would be to consider transferring barangays from political units (with a set of elected officials) to simply administrative units.

There have also been calls for the abolition of the Sangguniang Kabataan. Apart from its inability to meaningfully participate in governance (the youth also have their school obligations), their only exposure to partisan politics and corruption has not been good for them.

Debate on federalism

In the administration's recent E.O. Executive Order No. 668 provided the space for a federalism debate within the bureaucracy. Continuing understanding of the federal setup and its implications is important.

The adoption of federalism is an opportunity to deepen the devolution process.

A positive note in favor of local autonomy has come from the judicial branch, not the executive.

A number of Supreme Court decisions could lay the groundwork for reform. They reveal a clear policy trend favoring the constitutionally mandated policy of ensuring the autonomy of local governments.

However, the many shortcomings of local governance has dominated the approach over the past nine years. Political expediency over long term reforms.

(Editor's Note: Ferdinand is professor and dean of the Makati College of Public Administration and Governance. He was executive director of the Local Governance Academy of the NGO during the Ramos administration)

DENR slams 'purist' ideas of environmentalists

From page A1

Director Horacio Ramos, head of the DENR Mining and Geosciences Bureau, was referring to assessments by Aron Suratos "Sonny" Perlas III and Clemente Bautista Jr. that Ms Arroyo had failed in the past eight years to deal with environment issues.

It is apparent position paper, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines strongly objected to Bautista's criticism.

"The mining act has very stringent environmental protection measures and they have been complied with," it said.

Even in the case of Rapu-Rapu, this was dealt with immediately," the chamber said, referring to operations of Lafayette Mining in Albay that Bautista had slammed.

"They have paid for their mistakes. Government and even civil society groups in the area monitor operations closely and do not condone the disappearance of fish catch. The waterway

"Mining activities which are undertaken in the biodiversity have become catalysts to rural development. It is illegal and unlicensed mining that have caused destruction and we anticipate the function and powers of environmentalists to help the government catch them."

Different definitions

Ramos said that Perlas had a "different definition of sustainable development."

"He wants a purist environment action versus (an action) with economic activity," Ramos said, pointing out that this was the mindset of a politician. Perlas has announced that he would seek the presidency next year.

"There's no sustainable development without economic activity. We can't live in a very pure environment but are die of starvation," he said.

He said the Arroyo administration had to take the middle ground between the purists and those pushing the mining industry from an "economic point of view."

"There's the extreme left and the extreme right. Government has to take the middle ground... We have obligations to the Filipino people which have to be done in a very responsible way," he said.

Balancing objectives

Ramos said that since the 1996 Marcopper mining disaster, the government and the mining industry had taken steps to prevent a repeat of this catastrophe.

He said both the government and mining companies had set in place business models that "balance and integrate economic, social, and environment objectives, thus aim for sustainable development and not just mining at all cost."

Ramos said the DENR had also put in place a 24/7 monitoring on all mining activities.

Aside from the environmental compliance certificate, Ramos said the DENR also required mining companies to establish trust funds "as well as following a clearly defined final land use.

Ramos said that the $2.1-billion mining industry has an existing 600,000 direct and indirect employment. By 2013, it is projected that the industry would be worth $13 billion, he said.

Substantial contributions

In its statement, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines pointed out that the industry was only given impetus by the government in late 2004 and it was only in 2005 when the Supreme Court finally resolved and affirmed the constitutionality of the Mining Act when the industry was resurrected.

Following several investment promotions road shows, the sector has gained investors confidence, making substantial capital investments in the mining industry, it said.

"The prospective entry of San Miguel Corp. into the industry as well as First Pacific indicates that the relatively untapped mining resources have attracting both a lot of attention. With $ 2 billion (one of metallic minerals and 51 billion tons of commercially minerals waiting to be accorded, downstream processing and manufacturing remains an area of immense potential," the group said.

The chamber quoted Edgar the Lamen, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as saying that "the most untapped sector but holds a lot of promise in the mining industry. While investments in this area have long been championed and promoted, issues related to environmental protection and indigenous rights continue to block efforts to make the sector ideal for economic development."

Ramon Ang of San Miguel Corp. was also reported as saying that "in the Philippines, the potential of mining is so huge yet we have a good deficit in most of gold, nickel and iron ore."

Critics offer no option

Ms Perlas said civil society groups are not against mining per se but are against irresponsible investors investing resources in the industry. We'd like to believe that but when they say and do all pains against the development of the mining industry," the chamber said.

"They want government to recognize local aspirations on mining issues and mainstream against mining even if there are economy to national laws and policies. We will reject them if they can stop illegal logging, illegal fishing and illegal mining operations.

"If these environmentalists are keen in monitoring environmental concerns, they should have at least mentioned about the environmental laws that have been passed, proclamations on biodiversity and protected areas and other environmental provisions mandated by the Philippine Constitution," the chamber said.

"Constructive criticisms are good when alternatives or options are being offered, but to criticize without any alternatives, that is destructive."

Loren on bid: Take me for what I am

By Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. LOREN LEGARDA DOES NOT SEE her being a woman as a hindrance to her quest for the presidency.

"Gender is secondary to the character and competence of aspirants," said Legarda during a one-on-one last week with members of the Valle Verde 6 Homeowners Association in Pasig City.

Legarda was responding to suggestions that President Macapagal-Arroyo's questionable performance was due to her gender, and that it may be hard to install another woman president in 2010.

"I admire GMA for her hard work," said the senator, who quickly added, "I think that's one lady similarity she's hard-working," eliciting chuckles from the homeowners.

Legarda, who has not yet formally declared her presidential bid, said she admired former President Corazon Aquino, the country's first woman president, for restoring democracy following the people power revolution of 1986.

"I am of course a firm believer in democratic principles and I will abide by that," she said.

"But it's difficult to compare because we're completely different...(for three of us," she said.

Top woman vote-getter

"Then again, I don't want to be compared to the past two female presidents," she said, pointing out that the electorate should judge her based on what "I stand for, who I am, what I have done and what I intend to do."

Legarda is the only woman to top the Senate race twice—in 1998 with over 15 million votes and in 2007 with over 18 million votes.

She made history when she was elected by her peers as majority floor leader, the first woman to occupy the post.

Recounting her achievements, Legarda said she authored and co-authored 295 bills and presented 124 resolutions during her first six-year term as a senator.

Thirteen of her pet bills were enacted into law, including the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, Anti-Child Labor Law, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law and Anti-Domestic Violence Act, while 41 of her resolutions were adopted by the chamber.

Legarda said she remains above the political fray of former President Joseph Estrada, who is the only presidential aspirant she said she would gladly endorse with.

Advocacy campaign

"We still need to talk. We're talking this week and we will have to discuss that," said Legarda who ran with the lone opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. in the controversial 2004 elections. Both lost to President Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro.

"I don't know if the vice president's position is something I will consider. All I want—if and when I formally declare to run for president...perhaps is not a presidential campaign. It will be an advocacy campaign.

"I will talk to the people, [tell them] what I have done and what I intend to do. I want to do humanitarian work for our people," said Legarda who was named by the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, as one of the Global Leaders for Tomorrow in 2008.

She said that she had long realized that her 23-year career in television as a broadcast journalist, 11 years in public service as a senator and her humanitarian work as United Nations regional champion for disaster risk reduction "all have contributed to make me see where the problems lie and what exactly I want to do."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, July 28, 2009
17th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Ex 33:7-11; 34:5b-9, 28
Gospel: Mt 13:36-43

Jesus sent the crowds away and went into the house. And his disciples came to him saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." He answered them, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seed are the people of the Kingdom, the weeds are those who follow the evil one. The enemy who sows them is the devil; the harvest is the end of time and the workers are the angels.

"Just as the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so will it be at the end of time. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom all those who cause others to sin and all who do evil. And these will be thrown in the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the just will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. If you have ears, then hear."

Commentary:

In today's passage from Exodus, we find that proximity is very important. If we're going to develop a deep relationship with God, it's important to consider the purpose of entering into God and to develop that intimacy with God, many times other people. It is not different for us unless we are willing to spend quality time alone with God, we will never develop a deep relationship with Him. Moses simply wanted a place where he could meet and fellowship with his friend and creator. To him, GOD was more than a concept enough or an unlimited pool of resources. He was a friend.

We must never forget God is not a distant creator power in the heavens; He loves true and his friendship with us, whom He has created. When we understand God's nature, distant relating, or lack of relationship with Him, it changes. He the one of us first, how we look at our time with Him. Although the uniqueness of our relationship with God may vary from day to day, things like worship, prayer, and reflection upon the selected text are at the heart of getting to know our creator on an intimate basis.

GMA comes out firing at political foes

By Christine V. Esguerra

IT WAS INVIGORATING.

President Macapagal-Arroyo devoted a good deal of her State of the Nation Address (Sona) yesterday firing at her critics.

Ms Arroyo earned most of her adversaries in a speech that lasted 97 minutes and 33 seconds and that was interrupted 126 times by applause.

But the identities were unmistakable, much to the delight of the predominantly pro-Arroyo crowd at the session hall of the House of Representatives.

The solons' cries of confrontational rebuke loudly and chronically attacked Cha-cha (Charter change) when they thought they could take advantage of a shift in the form of government. It can but they find they cannot benefit from it, they oppose it," she said to an opposite reference to erstwhile ally, former Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

De Venecia, an indefatigable proponent of Charter change in the past, is now at the forefront of the campaign against it.

Estrada

Former President Joseph Estrada also seemed to figure personally in the session's focus.

Estrada has been criticizing Ms Arroyo despite getting executive clemency from her court after he was convicted of plunder in 2007.

Ms Arroyo succeeded Estrada after he was driven out by a militant-backed people's revolt in 2001.

"Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. Those who should be called should not threaten it, especially if they have been there," she said, eliciting hoots from the crowd.

"I am bluntly accused, sadly, not proud, of using my office for personal profit. Many of those who accuse me of it have filmdom and spending habits that make them a walking proof that I have not," she said.

"We can read their financial lives. They had the chance to serve this good country and they blew it by serving themselves."

Ms Arroyo said that she inherited in 2001 a Philippines crippled by fraud by her second especially in the face of the global recession.

"In 2008 up to the first quarter of 2009 we stood among only a few economies in Asia Pacific that did not shrink," she said.

"Gorgeous this in 2001, when some of my current critics were in the best position to govern, then was surging but our country was on the brink of bankruptcy."

Rizal

Ms Arroyo also came out firing at critics over the food being getting in connection with the Rizal Day celebrations.

"To those who want to be president, this advice: if you really want something done, just do it hard, do it well. Don't pussyfoot. Don't practice what others say but words in public," she said.

The statement seemed directed at Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas, a self-proclaimed champion of cheaper medicines and a known presidential aspirant.

In an anti-Charter change rally in December, an angry Roxas shouted: "P_____ ina! Ano ba ito?... Pangarap ang Cha-cha kaysa Cha-cha GOD! What is this! ...Let us kill this Gloria-forever Charter change!"

Roxas has also blamed the Arroyo administration for the delayed implementation of cheaper medicines law.

Ms Arroyo said her critics should learn from how she handled the issue of lowering drug prices in the country.

She said she would subject a number of drugs under a "maximum retail price" system, consistent with the cheaper medicines law, which Roxas actually voted against in the Senate.

"I suggested the tough creation of the House of the cheaper medicines 2008 since the most vocation of any critics," she said. "The outside the drug companies reclassified to bring down drug prices, slashing by half the prices of 10 drugs," the President said.

She particularly thanked Representatives Aside Cua, Antonio Alvarez, Eduard Ilero and Teodoro "Teddy Boy" Locsin...but not Roxas—in her speech.

Direct threat

Locsin called Ms Arroyo's handled a "direct threat" to them who criticize her administration.

"This is an indication of the cruelty and the dictatorship that the current administration is capable of, and another example by the administration to stifle our freedom of speech and expression," Locsin said in a statement released by his spokesperson, Margaux Salcedo.

Estrada said he would not be cowed and would continue to be Ms Arroyo's critic.

'Cries of despair'

Roxas chose to ignore Ms Arroyo's attack.

"I don't pay attention to such attacks. What I am concerned with is the cries of despair of our countrymen," he said.

In a text message last yesterday, Roxas said he only wanted to do initially bring down the prices of 22 essential medicines as mandated by the law that he championed in the Senate in 2007.

"She should instead fulfill her duty to bring down the prices of medicines," he said.

Roxas went to court to compel Ms Arroyo to order implementing to sign an executive order drafted by the health department on June 19 authorizing the implementation of the maximum retail price on 22 essential drugs. With reports from Jerome Aning, Michael Lim Ubac and Leila B. Salaverria

No clear goodbye from GMA in her last Sona

From page A1

This was in sharp contrast to the unexplained declaration of President Corazon Aquino in her final Sona on July 22, 1991 that she would transfer power to succeed.

In her speech, described as more of a "valedictory," Arroyo kept away from citing numbers and statistics and said that there was no "unsolved, unfinished" achievement that was destined to confirm present problems or future progress—dismissive.

She promised that she would be there for the peaceful transfer of power in June 1992, the swearing in of her successor.

Calling on the military leaders in the room, regular colonels and generals here to ensure clean and honest elections in May 2010. In passing, she said: "*Mas marami talaga sa inyong lahat, at position* (Thank you everyone and goodbye)."

Combative

In her leading address, combative in tone that turned emotional at the end, Ms Arroyo looked out at critics, including her predecessor, for opposing Charter change and for sowing fear of plotting to impose martial law.

Wearing a reddish pink Filipiniana gown by Inno Sotto, she said the final hour, watching hard, noiseworthy critics.

"There isn't a day I do not work at my job as a working mama when I do not think through a work-related problem. ... Our people deserve a government that works and is hard at they do," she said.

She added: "Every step forward must be taken in the teeth of political provocation and economic uncertainties that could push you two steps back if you flinch and falter. I have not flinched. I have not faltered," she said.

Critics frightened by shadows

She said she had set clear aim of the things that scared her many critics. "They are frightened by their own shadows."

The President said that in the face of attempted coups, she turned emergency powers only two in 2006.

"But I was able to resolve these military crises with the ordinary powers of my office. My critics call it dictatorship. I call it democratization. My critics are frightened by their own shadows."

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Martial law

"But I never declared martial law, though they are running around as if I did. In truth, what they are really afraid of is their weakness in the face of this well-imagined threat," she said.

"I say to them: do not tell us what we all know; that democracy can be threatened. Tell us what you will do when it is attacked. I know what to do," she added.

Ms Arroyo also enumerated the legacies of her eight-year, scandal-plagued presidency including the enactment of key legislation leading to cheaper medicines, lower power costs and cheaper rice.

She specifically mentioned the cheaper medicines law, and Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, and the rice tariff law.

The enactment of the cheaper medicines law prodded drug companies to come up with low-cost generics and brands, and to slash by half the prices of 10 commonly prescribed medicines, Ms Arroyo said.

She said she was planning other drugs under a minimum retail price.

The President said the next generation would also benefit from lower public debt to grow domestic product ratio, and lower foreign debt.

Ms Arroyo said the "taxpayer friendly reforms," mainly taxes, taken by the administration helped the economy grow over the years and weather the global economic crisis.

'Strong economy'

"The state of our nation is a strong economy. Good news for our people, bad news for my critics," she said.

Ms Arroyo also mentioned her administration's huge investments in infrastructure, poverty mitigation, agriculture reform, education, management, health, housing, among other things, using "human focus" and others as to her previous Sona.

She acknowledged former governor, resident Gigi Gabriela who found employment at the Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency (Philexim), who was caught smoking, Mylene Jaycee Macapobol, the first Bicolana woman to topped the Miss Universe Philippines, who was given training on medical terminology, and who became Lechon in Cebu.

She also acknowledged bringing cheap binary Pangasinan by the industry and strong faith to God.

Ms Arroyo also outlined her agenda for the Cabinet and Congress, as she vowed to work to boost tax revenues through improved collections and new tax sources.

Tax alcohol, cut books

She said new taxes should come from alcohol and tobacco, and not from books.

"Tax luxuries to it's age and liquor, and not tax goods. Revenues from taxes on alcohol and cigarettes should go to health and education," she said, mentioning the Philhealth premium of the poor and construction of classrooms as possible recipients of these revenues.

Ms Arroyo also called on Congress to enact the Philippine Executive Transport Authority Law, amend the Public Service Law, save growing concerns about unsolicited or spam messages by telecommunications companies, regularize the Farewell Families Program, provide Comprehensive Agreement Reform Program, reinstate Bill Declaring the confirmation of the PAL-Silkair land reform (Lifeline) and Simplified Net Income Taxation, and fund the deployment of more police on the streets.

"Some say that after this Sona, it will all be politics. Sorry, but there's more work," she said.

Ms Arroyo also said there were good prospects for peace talks with the New People's Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

She defended herself on her low rating, even as she vowed that there was much work to do between now and 2010, especially in the areas of the global economic slump.

"I did not become President to be popular. To work, to lead, to protect and preserve our country, not people, that is why I became President," she said.

Toward the end of her speech, Ms Arroyo tapped away after thanking the people for "allowing me to serve as your President." With Elmo Honrado, Inquirer Research

It's very clear, she's stepping down after her term—Mike A

From page A1

sary: "I thought she very clearly talked about finishing her term. And she clearly talked about elections."

Senate's Alan Peter Cayetano said the speech was "deliberately vague or silent on issues of Charter change, not extending her term, or when she is stepping down."

Said another presidential hopeful, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, "It was clear to all of us that the Constitution would be followed."

Wayne Echo Rep. Eduardo Bonoan Arroyo was quite pressed: "there a lame-duck President trying to be a strong President till the last second of her term. She wants to go down fighting or work for Cha-cha through Congress."

All about hubris

Gilbert Remulla, spokesperson of the Nacionalista Party, said Ms Arroyo's speech was "all about hubris and boasting."

Sen. Pia Cayetano said: "I was wondering why she was very quiet about the issue of term limits, especially with the [Supreme Court] decision. Is that what she meant when she said that she will not be a lame duck President?"

Sen.

'She is longest burning President'

From page A1

ver of all effigies that militants from the umbrella Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) built for the Sona rallies.

Thousands of protesters marched the streets of civil unrest. If the time to extend her term beyond next June 30or impose martial law, police said trucks, backed with water cannons, would be deployed to block their heading to the Batasang Pambansa, where the President delivered her speech.

Police placed the number of protesters at 8,500, while organizers said their ranks reached 15,000.

Similar rallies were mounted in key cities outside Metro Manila, as well as in Hong Kong and New Zealand.

The "Gloria Forever" effigy seemingly repelled the anti-Arroyo crowds at around 3:45 p.m. yesterday. It took roughly 10 minutes before the four Bayan officials interpreted it, saying the display had been burned.

As the rap-rock band Sinta's "Bitin" played heavy rock, protesters took turns throwing bottles and rods at the figure, and chanted "Gloria, durugin ang!" (Gloria, burn!) in an outpouring of discontent.

More hands took the stage to play as young people danced under a light shower.

"The musicians are here to show their support in us and express their disgust over the corrupt Arroyo administration," Renato Reyes Jr., Bayan Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) secretary general, told the inquirer.

Personalities who usually attended Sona rallies in the past again came out yesterday. They included former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, 1-SAGIP Rep. Arlene Brosas, Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza, Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano, Kabataan Party-list Rep. Raymond Palatino, Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño, Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran, Anakpawis Rep. Joel Virador, Bayan Muna Rep. Josel Ta-ñada, Gabriela Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan, Bayan Muna Rep. Clarissa Ocampo, Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares, Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño, Bayan Muna Rep. Umbra Kato, Bayan Muna Rep. Pedro Acharon Jr., Bayan Muna Rep. Jaime Soriano, Bayan Muna Rep. Eleuterio Manggagawa, Bayan Muna Rep. Ferdinand Gaite, Bayan Muna Rep. Antonio Tinio, Bayan Muna Rep. Ariel Casilao, Bayan Muna Rep. Rafael Baylosis, Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate, Bayan Muna Rep. Alan Jazmines, Bayan Muna Rep. Nicanor Briones, Bayan Muna Rep. Fernando Hicap, Bayan Muna Rep. Ferdie Inton, Bayan Muna Rep. Ariel Ronquillo, Bayan Muna Rep. Jerry Acuzar, Bayan Muna Rep. Rafael Mariano, Bayan Muna Rep. Joel Virador, Bayan Muna Rep. Josel Tañ

Sol-Gen defends Comelec deal

By Norman Bordadora

SOLICITOR GENERAL ALICIA Dumandan yesterday defended the Commission on Elections' (Comelec) P7.2-billion contract with Smartmatic-Total Information Management against a citizens' group's charge that the deal did not comply with the law.

Dumandan, the concurred latter memory, urged the Supreme Court to dismiss the petition of the Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM), which asserted that Smartmatic-TIM's vending machines had not been adequately pilot tested, and did not satisfy the law's security standards.

Dumandan countered that the law does not require the pilot testing of the precinct count optical scan machines that will be used in 2010. What the poll automation law provides for, she said, was the pilot testing of the automated system in at least two highly urbanized cities and two provinces in an election after the law's enactment.

"The regular national and local elections referred to in the provision was the May 10, 2007, polls since it was the election held immediately after the effectivity of Republic Act 9369," the solicitor general's 42-page comment said.

Dumandan also said that the law did not categorically call for mandatory pilot testing in 2007.

"In any event, the pilot automation in the May 10, 2007, elections, as demanded by petitioners would not be completed with, owing to its tenure impossibility," she said.

The Comelec vowed an automated system during the autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao elections in August 2008.

Dumandan said the precinct count optical scan machines of the Smartmatic-TIM consortium "satisfied all the systems evaluation criteria as certified by the technical working group."

"[The] system proved to be 100 percent accurate," Dumandan said.

The reports of the technical groups certified that the optical scan machines "counted the votes as marked on the ballots with an accuracy of not hundred percent, or more than the required 99.995 percent accuracy rate," she said.

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'Madz' named peace artists by Unesco

THE PHILIPPINE MADRIGAL SINGERS, one of the most awarded choirs in Asia and the world, is to be designated "Unesco artist for Peace" for two years on Monday (today in Manila) in France.

A statement posted on the website of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on Sunday said Unesco Director General Koichiro Matsuura was to designate the group as such during a 7 p.m. reception on July 27 at its headquarters in Paris.

It said the distinction was "in recognition of their efforts to promote dialogue and understanding among peoples in Southeast Asia, their contribution to ensure Unesco's message of peace and tolerance, and their dedication to the ideals and aims of the organization."

Also known as the Madz, the Philippine Madrigal Singers was initially organized as the University of the Philippines Singers in 1963 by Prof. Andres D. Feliciano, a Navotas artist for Music in 1999.

The group performs different musical genres, specializing in the Renaissance singing style for which it was named.

It has won numerous awards, including the top prize in the European Grand Prix for Choral Singing in 2007 held in Arezzo, Italy.

Unesco said the group's influence in the Philippines and throughout Asia was far-reaching, noting that it was responsible for training more than 200 singers and choral music specialists since its creation.

"Named for two years, the Philippine Madrigal Singers are expected to bring their support to Unesco programs on cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue," the statement said.

Quirino D. Balonzo

Boracay airport ready by Sept.

THE CATICLAN AIRPORT GATEWAY TO the internationally renowned resort island of Boracay, will be opened to bigger aircraft in September after the departments of tourism and transportation recently gave the go ahead to upgrade the runway.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano in a statement said the Caticlan International Airport Development Corp. (CIADC), a private consortium, has been granted the 25-year airport upgrade project which ends this month.

The upgrade, prompted by a series of massive plane mishaps this year, will start with the commencing of a boundary fill to lengthen the runway. Durano said this part of the project would be finished by September, just in time for the tourist season to get started.

"The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines, government agencies concerned and the private sector are considering all efforts to complete the runway upgrade. We have been assured it will be fully operational in September, the start of Boracay's peak season," Durano said.

The recent accidents involving planes overshooting the runway prompted the CAAP on May this month to prohibit the biggest aircraft of Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific and Zest Airways from using the airport. At present, the runway is limited to one-way takeoffs and landings by smaller planes.

With the Caticlan airport—which is only 10 minutes away by ferry from Boracay—closed for rehabilitation, the major airliners are using the Kalibo, Aklan, airport which is two hours away by land from the resort island.

Arlucita L. Alay

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OPINION

Legacy of corruption

EDITORIAL

WITH PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO DUE TO step down from Malacañang next year, talk has turned to the legacies that she will be leaving. One of the legacies most often mentioned is the legacy of corruption. Mrs. Arroyo is perceived to be one of the most corrupt presidents the country has ever had. During her incumbency the country has sunk to the depths of corruption, such that Transparency International last year ranked the Philippines 141st in a list of 180 countries.

What has not been written much about is the moral corruption during the Arroyo administration. There is financial corruption where the degree of corruption is measured by the amount of money that people in power amass. The financial corruption during the Arroyo administration, by most accounts, bids well to compete with that of the Marcos dictatorship. But worse than the financial corruption that has been taking place is the moral corruption of the nation.

Moral corruption is taking place because the Arroyo administration has shown that crime pays, that it is good to be bad, that it is all right to lie, cheat and steal so long as one is not caught. Ovid wrote in "Heroides," "The evil justifies the means," and since then corrupt politicians have used this statement as their guide in their official acts. One can lie, cheat and steal to be able to continue to hold on to power, and power is used to lie, cheat and steal and amass greater wealth.

The Arroyo administration has used money to strengthen its hold on power. An example of this was the distribution of bags of money to congressmen and local government officials after a meeting in Malacañang at a time when the President was facing an impeachment move. There is always talk of money changing hands when Mrs. Arroyo faces a political crisis or when a move that would benefit her politically is under way. This is the way of Arroyo's transactional politics.

The corruption is humongous; amounts are no longer just in the millions—they're in the tens of millions, hundreds of millions, even billions. Almost every big business deal or project involving the government is honeycombed with graft and corruption. From the very beginning of the Arroyo administration the corruption mill has been operating. Remember the alleged $2-million IMPEA bribe for which former Jueteng Secretary Fernando Poe Jr. is now facing a court case? And now, the "midnight" Lahar-Iran project is suspected to yield hundreds of millions of pesos in "commissions" for a favored few.

Many corrupt deals and projects have been exposed in the Senate and the media, but how many cases have been filed in court? Has anybody been prosecuted successfully and put behind bars? None. No big fish has been caught and jailed. It is this climate of impunity that has made a mockery of the law, and that is setting a bad example for people, and especially for young, impressionable minds.

Some people have described this Arroyo's politics as Machiavellian, and they may be correct. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy says that it has been a constant view among philosophers that there is a special relationship between moral goodness and legitimate authority. Many authors believe that the use of political power is rightful only if it is exercised by a ruler whose personal moral character is strictly virtuous.

It is this moralistic view of authority that Machiavelli continues in his best-known book, "The Prince." For Machiavelli, there is no moral basis on which to judge the difference between legitimate and illegitimate uses of power. Rather, authority and power are considered: whoever has power has the right to command; but goodness does not ensure power and the good person has no more authority by virtue of being good. In this context, Mr. Arroyo would be described as politically amoral, or, if you will, Machiavellian.

Many political commentators say that financial corruption is one of the major "negative" legacies of President Arroyo. (We say "negative" because a legacy is generally thought to be beneficial for the legatee.) But moral corruption is the even worse negative legacy of this administration. It affects the government and the people all the way down the line. It is a legacy that the moral majority will look and discard when the Arroyo administration finally bows out of power.

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Stark irony

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

SAN FRANCISCO.—FILIPINO AMERICANS fret over a stark irony blurted last June here remarked presently when Common Sqatter who spoked People Power into smashing Marcos dictatorship, Serbio counts.

The irony: still-ling President Macapagal-Arroyo when she meets President Barrack Obama on July 30. So will Pil-American activist Melissa Roxas' elaborate.

Under Lola de Lima, the once-flabby Commission on Human Right pissed together the ris-ing search and rescue of Roxas. The ordeal confirms State Department's annual human rights reports of impunity that thinks abductions and tortures, both military and insurgent.

Majority (54 percent) of Pil-Americans voted for Obama. The 2008 census tallied 3.1 million Filipinos in the US. They're the second largest Asian American group, almost half of Filipino immigrants cluster in five state. Hawaii, New York, Illinois and New Jersey account for smaller numbers.

"We fought the Marcos conjugal dictatorship," three women leaders told over dinner. "What makes the Arroyo conjugal autocracy think it can undo what Cory mends for?"

They oppose soubling 2010 elections, instead favor-or parallel Charter change. They scoffed at the idea of installing Mr Arroyo as vaudille in a "transition revolutionary government."

"National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales peddled the transitory juro idea to the Supreme Court chief justice. But Chief Justice Reynato Puno rebuffed him and, by implication, Gonzales' shadowy principal, the President.

How deeply do Pil-Ams feel about these issues? Seventeen per cent voted for her in 2004. With here are the youngsters back home. They have no memories of martial law. They world is of unshared freedom. It disappointed, like Jesus Burgos, is beyond them.

The ranks of those who fought Marcos are thinning. Those who sign up with the Obama-Arroyo Economic Jog Secretary are few but articulate. Former Defense Secretary Andrés Cruz's July 31 warning before the foreground fast however stoked the concern of many.

Leading presidential aspirants vote "to preserve the freedom of space and Free Constitution" Obama's after she steps down." Case sound. A President who steps too long is tempted to resist leaving. She feels being constitutional immunity. What about the Vice Gentleman's de facto immunity? One didn't delve into that.

Will the President subpoena for today's hearin of Iraq Armed Forces arrested? Cory asked. That would "pave the way for the rise of PMA Class of 1978." They would "ruin the severely opposition rushed to secure the 2010 elections."

Armed forces leaders assure us PMA Class 1978 will be split a' polish professionals. Did they forget the "Rolex 12"? Or Military Commission No. 1, which sentenced Brigadier Zagosa to death by mukatry.

PMA Class'71 became the "misled list" of the dictatorship, notes the Yale University study, "Closer Than Brothers." Five among its 10 graduates were torturers, six were murdered, and others were coup plotters. Look at Danilo Lim-ian and Eduardo Ermita, and Jose Ano Santos's words ring in your ears: "Few poor the country that must suffer gloriously triumphant generals."

Reformers whistled down the Supreme Court majority who thrashed Arroyo's people's initiative, Cory notes. The Court will soon have all its justices appointed by one President.

Recall the chief justice who would not alter Imelda Marcos holding her pursed. Among others Enrile, that Court surrendered the power to rule on habeas corpus petitions. Besides against's urgent racous speech challenged that supplication. But an assassin's bullet beat him to it.

"The martial law bogey is being used to incite people against the government," complained evangelody the Palace press-gauged into service. Sone Jose, Juan Miguel Zubiri. In historic Senate-ty Ermilda Pimentel and Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio. "That was cheap of Gen."

Hypocrisy is subtle bread. There is never a short supply. Thus, Indiana Secretary Gilbert Teodoro pants: "President Arroyo would not tolerate pursuit for her own political gains." Take it from the "Iron Fish" Secretary for Edmilio Constantino, Ferdinand Bongbong Marcos' friends spark-plugged the "God has on the Quiet" coups against President Aquino. He now does the Constitution he tried to scrap on limits of presidential terms.

President Aquino came to the UN and addressed a joint session of the 111 Congress. She left Adela Kyte (no relation) revolutionary, since Mr. Justice Claudio's bench against the Soft Tax. That example spindled into Czechoslovakia's "Velvet Revolt" and Lebanon's "Cedar Revolution," among others. With integrity unquestioned, Aquino ensured peaceful transition of power.

Mrs. Arroyo's strategy comes as a diminished figure. She will posture as "leader." Indeed, US and Philippine interests coincide in areas like terror's protracted conflict. But like Marcos and Estrada before her, she is sacrificed by them. There is a Faustian dispensation for a little more time.

But this Dread Debtor Queen's minds by the old "die-is-cast-roll" rule. "No country is going to ever straddle if its leaders explain the economy to enrich themselves, or police can be bought off by drug traffickers," President Obama told Ghana's Parliament.

Even the prudence wants to invest in a place where the government claims 20 percent off the top, or the head of the free leadership is corrupt. No per-son wants to live in a society where the rule of law gives way to the cult of brutality and bribery. That is not democracy that is tyranny. And now is the time for it's end.

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(E-mail: bumbum@edsamail.com.ph)

State of the mind

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I set totally prepare that the years of the Aquino Administration ended at July 30 instead of June 30, that is April 2, as sanity dictates. April 2 is April Fool's Day, when the claims of Filipino presidents, including those who were not elected to, almost other they've done for the country are best said. Who knows? Maybe the day elevated to Manila mass was supposed to be true.

Who knows too? Maybe the day deemed to decapitate Angels have persuaded GMA yesterday to sell the truth. And deliver this speech.

GOOD AFTERNOON, SPOUSEPEOPLE AND bonny lickers. I do not see any ladies here and the only gentleman I know is at home pushing his bags in hopes he might still be invited to where I am going. I will not bore you, even if that gives me great pleasure, with a long speech full of statistics which you would be loath to believe anyway. I'll go straight to the point.

Juan Ponce Enrile is right: I am the last president this country has ever had. Of course, he said that too about Marcos and Estrada, and he is right this time. No Filipino president has done more than me. No Filipino president will do more either.

For once and for all, I have dismissed this canard of my dictatorship. Chief of them is that we are a democracy. There has been no more pernicious, and portentous, illusion than that. The Filipinos who voted us victors are hypocrites. They do not believe it any more than I do. They do not care for it any more than I do.

Ferdinand Marcos has accomplished much in dismissing us of the illusion too, but he has fallen short of heroic. In the very least, he was elected twice before he decided that eight years were not enough. I haven't. Never. Never on earth and have already done nine years. Marcos cheated massively too, but he did not make stealing the vote a sly device the cultivation of elections. I have. By winning elections fairly believably before started lost. Marcos gave the poor and ignorant the impression they were actual-ly have a say on who should rule them. I have convinced that. The only one who should rule them is the one who knows best. God knows I am, and God put me here.

The institutions of democracy have never worked, and will never work. Long before I came, they were already in the process of disintegration. The case with which I bought them expeditiously proof of it. I have merely hastened that process. I have merely brought things to their logical end.

I did not invent buying congressmen. I merely improved on it. The congressmen were corrupt long before I came on. Estrada sold the soul of their previous speaker, Ramon Mitra Jr. They will sign anything, including toilet paper. Mitra was kind to draw the line at toilet paper. And you can take the example of their subsequent speaker, Jose de Venecia, Jr. He will say anything, including all the good things he said about me when they tried to impeach me. And all the bad things he said about me when they impeached him—or booted him out as speaker. But don't take my word for it, just read my favorite columnist in the business.

I did not invent buying bishops. I merely paid them more. I am not the only one who likes to break vows. The bishops were breaking theirs long before me, specifically their vows of humility and poverty. The last thing they are is humble, and the last thing they want to be is poor. In fact, they are as fond of money long before me, thinking dying bankrupted with bellies if they did not part with their hands. I merely threaten the clergyman with hard words. Give unto Caesar's what is Caesar's and as God what is God's, and they imagine them-selves to be both. Why doesn't think different-ly?

I did not invent buying the courts; the judges were for sale long before me, some of them sitting price tags on their backs. Of course during my time, the law went on to punish the innocent and reward the guilty. Why should it be otherwise? Why should we delude the poor and weak that they can have justice on earth? That's what heaven is for. Earth is where the strong survive, and the weak perish. Indeed, why should we allow "professional bleeding hearts" to remain free, let alone to be heard? They've already committed two crimes by existing, being frank and being problem-pers.

I did not invent corruption. I merely perfected it. Anyone can aspire to corruption; only those possessed of courage have the money. And I have lots. It was there during Marcos' time, it was there during Cory's time, it was there during Ramos' time, it was there during Erap's time, And Ramos thinks himself an elder statesman? He is merely old and overrated. Erap was caught; therefore, only Erap is corrupt.

I did not invent lying to office. Marcos did it before me. But he was much too coy he liked to cover his tracks. I do it openly. At least I am honest about being dishonest.

I did invent stealing the vote. But that too is dark unity if you are caught. Or since I was, if they can do something about it. I did invent stealing votes, including people from non-existent places, from human beings to pickup. I did invent stealing from, from foreign among them, but who cares. Aquino was just the son of someone who helped restore democracy to the country and democracy has been a bane to us.

And of course I did invent a new excuse for corruption.

I can always say, "I... am... sorry" for those, Dear Lord, I am sorry. I am sorry I cannot say for those, I am proud of them. If I am sorry at all, it is that I cannot live forever, though I am hard at work trying to remedy that by finding a diet with Vin Diesel Who. I do not mean Chelsea, though he looks cranial.

Absolute life. I'm not content to myself with being merry-thought or mandible myself—at least the last time I said, "I... am... sorry..."—by sticking around. See you next time.

Romulo's ode to Love

IN THIS COLUMN HAS BEEN WRITTEN, THE entire country awaited the President's State of the Nation Address. The anticipation this year as to what President Macapagal-Arroyo would tell the nation was greater than in the past eight State of the Nations, doubtless due to the fact that this was her last. In July next year, a new president will be standing at this Batasan to assess the state of the nation is inherited from her administration. There's also a lot of speculation as to whether GMA would announce her plans to run for office. Would she push for Charter change before 2010? Would she say it's not possible since she would be back in Congress next year?

Her being recognized to continue politics in the Lower House qualifies to be the subject of a separate column. Suffice it to say that Executive Secretary Ging Ermita (or Press Secretary Ging) Bunsuda looked to the press in the face of mounting criticisms of her government, as well as a push-deal of people power to withdraw the support she has enjoyed. Whatever she said, it's safe to assume that withdrawal is not a popular stance.

* * *

Over the past few days, everyone's favorite pastime was to assess GMA's support level. Some assessments have been outright civilized and one-sided, while others have tried to be fair and balanced. Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said that while the critics are loud, they do not reflect the picture and her score card has pluses and minuses now, in the perspective of history GMA would be viewed as an effective leader especially in the field of infrastructure.

Senator Manny Villar echoed it on ANC's report card vote. Some assessments have been outright civilized and one-sided, while others have tried to be fair and balanced. Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said that while the critics are loud, they do not reflect the picture and her score card has pluses and minuses now, in the perspective of history GMA would be viewed as an effective leader especially in the field of infrastructure.

Senator Manny Villar echoed it on ANC's report card vote. Senator Villar, who topped the 2007 senatorial race, has always been a good debater (as Press Secretary Ging Bunsuda found to the press) in the face of mounting criticisms of her government, as well as a push-deal of people power to withdraw the support she has enjoyed. Whatever she said, it's safe to assume that withdrawal is not a popular stance.

* * *

Over the past few days, everyone's favorite pastime was to assess GMA's support level

Another poll automation option

LETTERS

THAT IT WAS FORMER CHIEF Justice Artemio Panganiban who penned a nightmarish "technomartial" scenario resulting from corrupt computerized glitches in an automated election system (Article, it was Chief Justice Menardo Guevarra who earlier voiced serious misgivings about an automated election system. And there was Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile expressing fears of a revolution in case of a failure of election in 2010, not to mention the disillusionment pointed out by Senator Francis "Chiz" Escudero and Richard Gordon relative to automated polling. For cost, there supposedly to be a lack of background-checking about functionaries. The winning bidder, it turns out, is capitalized for only P13 billion while its running bid a P7.2 billion, for starters. The so-called "hacks" and "sub-hacks" (where the votes will be gathered and canvassed) were chosen by a subcontractor without the direct participation of the Comelec.

It's less than a year from the May 10, 2010 elections, and it appears we have yet to get our act together, and there is still a clear need for more homework, as instructed by the recent Senate hearing. It seems fond of Monday quarterbacking now, but the automated polling system should have been vetted and tested out in a presidential election but in an off year, where the presidency is not in play and there is less participation aside, comparatively speaking, and the incumbent president is expected to set the administration's true leader of the nation, the only outgoing US President George W. Bush saved sad pendulum of woe the recent US elections. Where President Bush invited to the White House all the living US presidents—from Jimmy Carter to Bill Clinton—to exchange notes with newly elected Barack Obama of the opposition Democratic party, it was remarkably a high water mark of US democracy in action!

In the 2010 elections, high stakes are clearly critically involved, most of all democracy itself and the survival...save just the semblance—of our nation. The 2010 elections can be a watershed of democracy to our country or it can be a cruel lesson that can ruinously usher the closure of our fourth-flawed and tax perverse hopes.

Yes, automated polling is a bold move, but shall we such idle things and dive into conscious—and inescapably troubled—science? Be prepared and ill-timed, as it elsewhere.

Yes, we can proceed with the P7.2-billion contract. It will not be useless or go to waste, unlike the Mega Pacific computer deal. But we can store both the hardware and software and have them ready for 2013, not 2010! Or, but, we can vote electronically on those over 8 or conduct a sampling test of the Smartmatic system in some randomly selected parts of the country in the 2010 elections, with features to fake, as parameters—and not just a non-genuinely small contiguous autonomous area like ARMM, as we had done, but some three not-with-the system to be narrated precisely for illustration's.

Let us decide soon.

—CHRISTOPHER L. ESCALANTE, retired judge, Iloilo City

Animals in Manila Zoo are happy

ANIMALS IN THE MANILA ZOO are happy and contented, otherwise they will not live long and will not breed there. That assured Dr. Agerico Sebastian, a zoologist with the zoological division of the Manila Zoo, in reply to claims of some animal welfare groups that animals are like humans, they need to be free in order to be happy.

Sebastian, who one of the few veterinarians providing health care to the more than 600 endemic and exotic animals in the country's premier zoological park, has been with the zoo for many years and he has become fully familiar with the animals' living conditions. Sebastian also said that the number of animals inside the Manila Zoo is steadily increasing although there is a need for additional species (e.g., gazelle and some rare birds and lizards). In fact, two more cages and other structures are now being built inside the zoo premises to accommodate the arrival of more animals, he said.

Also according to Sebastian, most of the animals in the Manila Zoo are acquired from zoos in other countries, especially those from cold areas in the world. Sebastian laments the fact that the zoo's detractors, mostly foreign-funded animal welfare organizations, seem to single out the Manila Zoo when in fact they ought to look in to the zoos not here in our country. He said that the Manila Zoo is adequately funded, having a monthly appropriation of P1 million, which is more than enough for the animals' food and the zoo's maintenance.

He added that the Manila Zoo will has a brighter future ahead, depending on the support and assistance of the city government.

—JOSEPHINE S. RAMOS, #12 Republic Supermarket Bldg., Soler E Torres, Sta Cruz, Manila

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Clean school toilets teach sanitation lessons

WHEN I ENROLLED IN GRADE 1 IN THE early '50s, the toilet in our school was the bushes behind the school building. I never in my humble life used many public school toilets until I took up my first year in college. Not only that—toilet bowls are dirty; stalls are clogged; no water comes from the faucets; restrooms are so called because they do not flush, a rotted drum half filled with water and a plastic dipper floating inside stands along one wall and students come and leave what is supposed to be a toilet, while others wait for their turn outside the door. Nothing has changed really. It seems that deplorable situation has been accepted as a way of life in our public school system by many stakeholders.

We all know the reasons for this unbelievable situation. First, toilets are planned and constructed without adhering to a design code which specifies the ratio between the number of users and the number of toilet units, according to the Sanitation Code's inability to cope with the number of students. For those in fact exist, school buildings, water pressure is not sufficient to rise to these elevations. Not enough personnel or janitors are employed to clean and maintain the cleanliness of toilets. The school administration does not provide these personnel with the proper and adequate supply of equipment, and materials for an effective and sustained cleaning job.

To correct the situation, once and for all, the Department of Education should immediately undertake a study of toilets in all public schools. To determine the number of toilet units necessary in each school, the design code specifying the ratio between the number of users and the number of toilet units should be strictly followed. For single-story buildings, end latrines can be constructed to accommodate the needed additional toilet facilities. Access to these should be through paved and roofed walks. For two-, three- or four-story school buildings, the additional toilet facilities should be located in similarly oriented structures behind or beside the school buildings. Adequate personnel should be employed and sufficient equipment and materials should be made available to ensure proper cleaning and sanitation. A supplementary budget will be necessary for this undertaking.

There is no reason why our students be taught the proper use of toilets. When these students become parents in the future, they will apply this knowledge in their own homes. Isn't this one of the goals of education?

—EPIFANIO S. RAMOS, #2 Mindanao St., Mindanao City

Gov't doesn't deserve commendation from UK

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE NEWS ARTICLE "UK lauds RP for rights stand." (Inquirer, 7/5/10) The United Kingdom should have first thoroughly studied the current human rights situation in the Philippines before commending the latter's administration for its political-to-not-to-end human rights stand in the form of silence on the Ampatuan massacre.

Based on our national data, there have been 1,118 cases of torture and 1,011 victims of extrajudicial killings since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo came to power in 2001. Also during this time, there have been 202 victims of enforced disappearances. (this is fact) Added to these are at least 279 victims of extrajudicial killings and 72,000 victims of human rights violations. These figures alone are enough to shock anybody. The UK government should withdraw their commendation because it is an insult to all the victims of this regime. The Arroyo administration deserves to be continued to steal offering commended.

—CHRISTOPHER, spokesperson, Ferrigation Bldg., 504-Unica Income Bldg., Ethical St., Legaspi City, Albay

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Across the NATION

Killing of ex-judge alarms Davao lawyers

TAGUM CITY—LAWYERS IN DAVAO DEL NORTE have expressed alarm over Sunday's killing of a former regional trial court judge here and urged authorities to conduct a thorough investigation.

The local chapter of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) was saddened over the killing of retired Judge Exuno Salcedo and that he was a great loss to the lawyers in the province, said lawyer Antonio Avenido, IBP chapter president.

"We condemn in the strongest terms the killing. No one has the right to take a life without due process," Avenido said, a retired member of the judiciary himself, said.

Senior Supt. Jose Pinero, Davao del Norte police chief, has ordered the Tagum police to investigate the case.

Salcedo was about to leave the parking area of the Tagum City Sports Complex, a cockpit arena in Barangay Canocotan here at 9:40 p.m. when a lone unidentified gunman approached and shot him several times, police investigators said.

"We were about to start the engine of his car when the suspect fired at him two times in the face and the side of the body as the side windshields were down," Inspector Ebenezer Devanadera, investigator in the case, said.

Police said the suggestion and another companion fled on a red motorcycle with no license plates.

Salcedo died while being taken by a van en route his companion to the nearby, to a nearby private hospital.

The victim, who would have been 76 (not 68 years old as earlier reported) in November, was the former presiding judge of the Regional Trial Court branch 31 in this city.

The flag at the Hall of Justice in Barangay Mankilam flew at half-mast yesterday as colleagues mourned the slain judge's death.

City councilor Boy Salvo, also a lawyer, knew Salcedo as "a good practicing lawyer."

"His death was really unfortunate and sends alarm to us in the profession."

Salvo called on the police to investigate the case exhaustively and asked for the condemnation of the law enforcers and government prosecutors in looking into the killing.

Avenido said his colleagues strongly believe Salcedo's killing has to do with the cases he had handled either as a judge or member of the IBP.

Pinero has ordered the formation of a task force related to the case, Supt. Giuseppe Gentile, Tagum City police chief, said.

Salcedo had received threats from unknown persons before the killing, Gentile said.

"The letter was just weeks ago, according to the victim's daughter," Gentile said, adding they had yet to know how the threat was given.

Avenido also said it was his normal for the public to think the murder was due to the victim's work.

"With what happened, retired judges like me and even lawyers need to be more vigilant," Avenido said, as he discussed suggestions of hiring or bonding up of his security personnel as unprotected.

Salcedo used to handle general cases. "Some heinous crimes to civil disputes," his colleagues said.

According to the Commission for the Defense of Liberties (Cidef), more than 23 judges and lawyers have been murdered in the Philippines since the start of President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration in 2001.

Salcedo was the second judge to be killed in southern Mindanao since 2000. In 2002, Judge Fuguio Valles was gunned down in Compostela Valley. Felamer Lim, *Inquirer Mindanao*

Tree lovers won't take promises, hold 'Sota'

By Rosette Ovejas
Inquirer General Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO— Promises by officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways did not appease tree-loving artists and activists here.

A week after the DPWH period to commence by suspending the earth balling (transfer) of 1,359 trees and the carving of 4,104 orchids to widen a 10-km stretch of the MacArthur Highway from Paraspanga to Tarlac, at least 20 artists put their brushes back to work again on Monday.

They held a so-called Sota of the Trees Address (Sota) (not exactly known as the State of the Nation Address (Sona)) of Pambansang Alagad Arsye before Congress.

In their version, the followings: Malabanggan, Gaston Fernandez, Pampanggi Artists Chamber, Aliya Chamber of the Arts and Sibling painter Dik-nior Jamon figures on trees, this time covering the Sindalan and Del Rosario portions of the highway in this Pampanga capital.

Gone is acrylic white and with arms outstretched as if hugging the trees, the protest sign was the same image that forced the DPWH to suspend by three months its activities.

"The stink of these trees on MacArthur [Highway] is that they're bound for death," local environmentalist Cecile Yumol said as Ate's "Kapalitan" blared from a van parked along the Dolor section of the highway.

Architect Gary Sulao did not only paint an adult figure. He drew a child next to it, showing the images to be holding hands.

"Trees are for families," said Sulao, father of a 6-year-old girl.

Yumol also spoke on radio yesterday to urge families to dump out into the trees every Sunday to enjoy the shade or paint them with human figures.

As artists like Eddie Perez, Hernie Flordia and Andy Ramos painted the trees with the protest signs at 10 a.m., motorists stopped to donate food or money.

Sarah Dizon, who commutes from Magalang town to San Fernando daily by jeepney, donated P500 for about two gallons of paint.

The Jeep and Hopper families pitched in money, too. The Federation of Homeowners' Associations from the city's 100 subdivisions submitted 50 shirts emblazoned with the message "Save our Trees"

The group wants the trees saved to provide a safety buffer between the highway and the communities.

Residents like Ronald Gregino, 13, spent Monday by helping paint the protest sign.

"This is my little contribution in protecting Mother Nature. It's been here around here since the trees were cut," said Ronglae, a high school senior at the Lara Integrated School.

The DPWH had cut down 148 trees from Sindalan to Balitoc as of July 21.

Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio and city officials also on July 21, led the Save Our Trees Coalition in a protest at the agency's General Luzon office.

But since DPWH officials could not show a written proof and gave only words that the tree cutting was "stopped until further notice," the coalition gathered the regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources the next day.

In the dialogue, Antonio Principe, DENR regional executive director, issued the blame on the DPWH, saying it was the latter that applied for a special tree cutting permit, which was supported by the Regional Development Council.

Panlilio ordered the provincial legal office to help the coalition in the lobby to preserve the trees. The provincial government has planted more than 31,000 trees along riverbanks in the province since July 2007.

Adeline Tolentino, DPWH regional director, on Monday said the suspension order would stay.

"All nothing has been stopped," he said in Filipino.

It had to be stopped because, he said, "there are no funds yet for the road widening project," which costs P700 million.

Also on Monday, 10 leaders of artists and environmentalists started going around Pampanga to invite residents to a public hearing by the Senate committee on environment on July 29 in this city, said Ching Pangilinan, a local environmentalist.

Yumol said the protests would not stop until both agencies withdraw the permit issued by Environment Secretary Lito Atienza on April 22.

NOT TAKING the promises of public works officials, green activists on Monday resume painting human figures on trees along the MacArthur Highway in Pampanga to save them from being cut to give way to a road-widening project. TONY S. ONGKINGCO/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Iglesia ni Cristo convoy snarls southbound traffic at SLEx

SAN PEDRO, LAGUNA—Traffic has snarled for at least six hours yesterday due to a buildup of vehicles traveling along the southbound lane of the South Luzon Expressway (SLEx), an employee of the Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC) said.

The heavy traffic began at around 9:17 a.m. along the Cabuyao exit due to a convoy of about 300 vehicles attending the Iglesia ni Cristo's 96th anniversary celebration in Calamba City Monday afternoon, PNCC radio operator Shirly Lidio said in a phone interview.

He said the buildup eventually up to Mayapa town and Calamba City toll plaza at about 10 a.m.

"The traffic was heavy from those [motorists] calling here were already tired at us," Lidio said.

As of 1 p.m., heavy traffic was seen along Pitong bridge in Sta. Rosa City going to Batangas exit.

Lidio said the vehicles were moving at a slow pace of about "five to ten kilometers per hour as [motorists] rest[ed] at full stop." Mervicar Clova, *Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Sona snapshots

MAN-DRENCHED Police use a traffic cone to protect President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Commonwealth Avenue.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Mike Arroyo, walks out of the Congress session hall after the lengthy Sona.

Recycled gowns back in fashion

From page A1

Santiago was in a beige sheer sleeved Filipiniana which she told reporters was actually an old gown. "It's 20 years old," she said.

Legarda, on the other hand, wore a 9-year-old fuchsia gown by Rudi Cabral, a favorite designer of movie stars.

Legarda had taken apart beaded ins she had collected from visits to Mindanao and asked Cabral to embroider the beads, piece by piece, on the gown's bodice and butterfly sleeves. To complete her Maitlin theme, she sported a Celestine clutch made of Mandaya fabric and wore lost pink open-toed heels.

Legarda caught many admiring stares because her dress hasn't her back.

Panache, butterfly sleeves

Audrey Tan-Zubiri, wife of Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri, donned a sleeveless ecru gown she had sourced on her previous forays of 2005 and 2006. She updated what seems to be her favorite outfit with a vintage panache.

Agriculture Undersecretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat's black-and-baby-pink gown was last worn during her parents' wedding anniversary in June.

Puyat remodified the gown by asking designer Dennis Lustico to attach bunny. By sleeves on the shoulder straps which she wants to be her favorite outfit with a vintage panache.

Agriculture Undersecretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat's black-and-baby-pink gown was last worn during her parents' wedding anniversary in June.

Puyat remodified the gown by asking designer Dennis Lustico to attach bunny

BEE HIVE? Arroyo with wife Angelia and children Marie Angelique (2nd from right) and Mikaela Gloria (right)

SENATORS Loren Legarda (left) and Miriam Santiago on their way to the joint session of Congress to listen to the President's Sona

US Ambassador Kristie Kenney with a yellow ribbon pinned on her bodice, a reminder to pray for the healing of her new President Corazon Aquino

showed a lot of cleavage, Ilaia complained her outfit, made of Burberry wraps of tulle by Pinoy Quillianos, with a gold clutch studded with Swarovski crystals and gold sandals.

New for a change

After five years of recycling her Ilaia Tesoro designed outfits, Sen. Sen Maria Consuelo "Jamby" Madrigal chose to wear a printed gown.

"This is the first time I had a new gown [inside]," the only reporters, observing all her foreign dress jackets with a green flowing skirt.

Madrigal described her outfit as a "modified Maria Clara" which was again designed by Tesoro.

From curtains to a gown

Ilaia said she originally planned to make curtains from the shimmering fabric she bought 14 years ago but later forgot all about it. Last year, she had it sewn into a terno which she had planned to wear at the opening session of Congress.

"But there was a plan to walk out on the gown was set aside. This time, however, I wanted to wear it in hopes that this will really be the last Sona of President Arroyo," she said.

The lawmaker described her terno as "very comfortable and cool," adding that it cost her less than a tank of good-quality rice or some P2,000.

Albayan Rep. Rita Hontiveros-Baraquel wore a Greek-inspired, backless white gown by Joel Archuelos. She offset her pristine outfit with a red clutch, a red belt with a flower buckle and blood-red nails.

On her left shoulder strap, Baraquel pinned a small yellow ribbon, a reminder for people to pray for the healing of former president Corazon Aquino. "This small ribbon is for her healing, relief and peace of mind," she said.

Are the stones real?

For her valedictory Sona, President Macapagal-Arroyo chose to wear a simple fuchsia gown designed by Rudi Sotto.

The gowns were proudly Philippine-made outfits, most of the men were in barong Tagalog while the women had some more to be smarter.

Rhodora "Bebot" Bengzon, wife of Speaker Prospero Nograles, wore a white and yellow gown made of pina and organza by Gary Espinosa. Fabulous diamond earrings glittered just above her deconstructed butterfly sleeves.

Asked whether the stones were real, Nograles laughed and said, "What kind of a question is that?"

Tacloc Rep. Nikki Prisco-Tocloc, wife of Defense Secretary and presidential adviser Gilbert Teodoro, wore a blue gown given by Rajo Laurel which featured elegant headwork.

Wives say 'cheese'

Angeli Tupaz, wife of Iloilo Rep. Ted Tupas Jr., arrived with daughter Trey. They wore identical gowns with gold bodices and black ballroom skirts by designer Sunday Aquino.

Jessica Sabbaluenga, wife of Cebu Rep. Benhur Salvador, was statuesque in a mustard-yellow gown by Cary Santiago. She looked fierce in mustards and gold jewelry and Kalantiaw-inspired sandals.

The spouses of representatives had a photo session at least before the official delivery of the Sona at the second floor lobby of the Batasan building.

The mostly female posse created a sea of tulle, tulle and chiffon as they posed under bling lights in their colorful gowns.

Sona live: Reporters' and readers' twitbook

From page A1

the reopening of congressional sessions in the morning, the hailing of street protests, arrival orders at the throbbing Batasan, to the much-anticipated presidential speech.

The buzzword has been live. Live online coverage before. Like the running sentiments of the Estrada impeachment trial and the Oakwood mutiny's, but yesterday marked the first time readers were also engaged in real-time "conversations" with frontline journalists in the field and on the desk.

"This is only the beginning," Inquirer DayDesk chief Rufino Antiporda said, when asked about future plans for the interaction on Twitter and other social networks.

A total of 19 reporters were deployed in and outside the Batasan complex. Updates were through their mobile phones posted in almost by the minute and were instantly posted on Inquirer.net's Twitter account @inquirerdotnet.

Twitter became the medium of choice recently in Iran, where the government clamped down on the mainstream media to prevent a comprehensive coverage of the election protests.

Praise for the Inquirer's use of the new medium was immediate.

"Great job compensating [the State's] talking points to 140 characters or less," one netizen said.

Others did their share of Twittering, from eye-catching shots of fashionistas in high fashion to scenes of violence at the barricades.

Postings on Twitter, an online service that has recently shot to prominence as a medium for breaking news, are limited to 140 characters and can be sent through the Web, text messaging, or specialized programs.

To view the messages, readers can follow selected Twitter accounts. Messages from these accounts would in turn appear on their Twitter pages when they log on to the social network.

Medium of dissent

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A FOREIGNER joins militants at a protest rally against President Arroyo's State of the Nation Address on Monday.

"Feel like you're closer with Sona updates and tidbits from @inquirerdotnet. Great work!" another said.

"Wow! this is a great way to stay updated! follow @inquirerdotnet for #sona updates! Let's be aware!" read one comment.

"@inquirerdotnet PLS stocking the Sona coverage. News has never been this better! :)" another user said.

Not one reader, the service was almost as good as catching the Sona on TV. "Updating myself well da #sona, thanks @inquirerdotnet! Sona not having a tv is no bad after all!"

"OMG #sona in 140-character increments @inquirerdotnet, is seriously interesting this way," quipped another.

Lovers to sona

Other comments poked fun at the affair. Swearing as a pastel phone-of her, Loren Legarda is seriously pro-gay, one reader quipped. "Gay along on si Legarda eh #sona hindi #SWF" (Legarda may have heard she's going to the sona, not Sona).

Many readers expressed concern over the rambling of an aging government "spy" by the protesters.

But another commenter seem not to amused and guessed:

"guys @inquirerdotnet who gave 5 lawmakers and public officials access to a government function alone or with their spouse?" one reader complained.

Yes I the only one who finds @inquirerdotnet's 'fashion' tweets annoying?" another said.

When one Inquirer reporter described an effigy of Mr Arroyo as "hideous," "bloated," and a creature straight out of a Mad Max movie, some readers immediately cried "bias."

Closer to action

Many Inquirer tweets captured scenes that would otherwise escape radio or TV coverage, taking readers closer to the action.

In Cebu citizens of sympathy for the ailing former President Corazon Aquino. "Tiny small ribbon is for her healing, relief and peace of mind," she said.

With a report from Riko Alberto

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RP five faces tall Fiba-Asia odds

By Marc Anthony R. Cardillo

TAIPEI—WHILE WAITING TO BOARD A plane for home on Monday, Powerade-Philippine coach Yeng Guiao hoofed and mouthed relentlessly for someone whose butt just got whipped at the 31st William Jones Cup here.

"I can't be nervous or anxious, because when I took this job, I already prepared for the best and the worst," Guiao said, when asked what he felt going into the "real thing" for the Filipino cagers—the Fiba-Asia Stanković Championship qualifier in Tianjin, China, in two wk.

He did make it clear that he's not giving the Philippines any false hopes.

"All of the Asian countries out there are bearable," Guiao said. "But the Middle Eastern countries would be very tough. Either we get very lucky against them or they play really bad. Actually, we have to be able to have both go our way.

"That's the reality that I learned playing here," he said of the event's Jones Cup campaign where the Filipinos won only two of eight matches.

"Good thing is that we won't be playing a Middle Eastern country [first] until the second round [of the eliminations]. If we make the quarterfinals, they'll all be there."

That's the time when the Philippines will be in trouble, he added.

"But then again, making the quarterfinals is a victory in itself," he added. "And who knows what can happen from there."

The Filipinos took horrible tumbles against Middle Eastern countries at the Jones Cup, losing to Jordan by 31, to Qatar by 20 and Lebanon by 12 and by 25 to an Iranian crew that even took it easy in the final quarter.

GUIAO: We need luck

By Philippine standards, these squads look unbeatable. And the Filipinos haven't even discussed in Qatar yet.

"Those countries have improved tremendously," said Dalon, referring to the Middle East quintets. "Before, they (players) only had the talent. Now they're quick and good. We can't simply outrun them anymore. In short, they understand the game now."

At the Jones Cup, the Filipinos scored victories only over (underseeded) Kazakhstan and Chinese Taipei-B and yielded close decisions to South Korea and Japan, countries that belong to the same group as the Philippines in the Fiba-Asia qualifiers.

Guiao reiterated that they can handle the Koreans and the Japanese, but as coach Mario Pelaez of Jordan said after thrilling the 10,000-plus sold-out crowd Saturday last week: "Even China is not safe (in the Fiba-Asia)."

Without Yao Ming, the Chinese are no doubt in for a top three finish (needed to qualify for the world championship next year.

Based on its Jones Cup showing, Lebanon, with the expected arrival of NBA veteran Matt Freije, will be the title favorite along with Iran, Jordan and China.

Another problem facing the Filipinos is that Jaydee Sobkuyhead is not 100 percent healthy. In fact, he asked Guiao to rest him in the final two games because he still felt pain in the hamstrings.

The point guard spot is supposed to be the Philippines' strongest.

Set to spark us Korea and Japan and definitely not in accurate from the long court as the two countries, the Filipinos definitely need luck beyond the first round.

With 10 Clubs included in their preliminary grouping, the Filipinos should easily advance to the second round, where every game is expected to be tough and harsh.

Ex-JRU ace Nocom dies in Lipa City bike crash

NOCOM: Role model

By Cedell P. Tupas

JAYSON NOCOM, A tough-playing power forward and former skipper of the Jose Rizal University in the NCAA, died early Monday due to head injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident in Lipa City.

He was 25.

The 6-foot-4 Nocom served as skipper of the Heavy Bombers

NOCOM: Role model

subset then played second behind the Sun Belt Red Lions. He averaged 16 points in Game 2 as the Bombers extended the NCAA Finals to a winner-take-all Game 3.

"The entire JRU community is deeply saddened by his death," said Bombers coach Ariel Vanguardia. "We will always remember Jayson as a very hardworking player and a good role model to his teammates."

Nocom joined the Oracle Swordsmen squad that won a seventh straight crown for the Mike Bantug franchise in the PBL recently.

Before his death, Nocom was also being eyed by Harbour Centre team manager Erek Arejola for the RP squad that will vie in the soon-to-be-launched Asean Basketball League.

Nocom, who hails from Victoria, Oriental Mindoro, remained close to the Bombers after suiting up for eligibility soaring in the sidelines' dormitory and joining the players in workouts.

"He was a big brother to the other players in the team," Vanguardia said of Nocom, who played three seasons for JRU. "He is their presence on the court. We are very very sad. The players went to see the late this year for him."

Vanguardia said Nocom was pronounced dead on arrival at the Mary Mediatrix Medical Center in Lipa around midnight Monday. He remains now to be transferred from Calamba, Laguna, to Manila Funeral parlor in Kalentong, Mandaluyong, last night.

Nocom was set to earn his Business Administration degree from JRU in March next year.

Tributes poured in news of Nocom's death reached the basketball community.

"Jayson was tough and physical on the court but he is a great friend off the court," said former San Beda player Ogie Menor. Nocom's teammates in the SP Under-16 Youth Team.

"The PBL condoles with the family of Jayson Nocom," a league statement said. "Oracle extends its sympathy to the family" by the death of one of the league's most promising players."

"The NCAA will miss a player with determination and passion," said NCAA president Fr. Rene de Jesus of San Beda.

UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES

ULAP RESOLUTION NO. 2009-01

COMMENDING PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO'S REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS AND EXPRESSING THE ULAP'S UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR AND SOLIDARITY WITH HER ADMINISTRATION IN PUSHING FORWARD THE COUNTRY'S PROGRESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Whereas, almost one year of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's leadership has transformed the national life — marked by a rapid growth of the economy, more jobs and housing for the poor, massive infrastructure projects in the countryside, and improved education and health care for ordinary Filipinos;

Whereas, the ULAP has applauded and is grateful for President Arroyo's personal role and achievement of local autonomy and the emancipation point in devolving the correct and automatic release of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) that empowered local government units and enhanced the delivery of basic social services to the people;

Whereas, amid the global financial crisis, only the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China have been and affected are now registering positive GDP growth in the Asia Pacific region;

Whereas, President Arroyo's visionary program, the 'Strong Republic Nautical Highways' paved the way for the operation of thirty (30) roll-on roll-off (RORO) ports linking the archipelago and making travel and transport of goods faster and cheaper, stimulating business and tourism;

Whereas, President Arroyo's legacy infrastructure achievements have greatly modernized the country's transportation system and emphasized her competitive advantage spreading development in the countryside through the construction of twenty (20) new seaports and six (6) major airports and the expansion and completion of the 377 km. Subic-Clark-Tarlac (SCT) airport corridor to add two (2) runway projects are to be completed by the end of 2009;

Whereas, under President Arroyo's aggressive policy of socialized housing, the rate for housing loans became the lowest in the region, thereby making home ownership more viable. 151,994 poor families benefited from housing and other programs of the NHA. 110,613 families acquired lots through Community Mortgage Program (CMP) beneficiaries provided with Certificates of Lot Awards, and almost a million families benefitting from various programs on shelter security and affordable home financing;

Whereas, between 2001 and 2009, under President Arroyo's leadership, 1.3 million jobs were created and the national government ably poured out billions for microfinance, job creation and poverty alleviation – unmatched by any other administration in terms of pro-poor programs and initiatives;

Whereas, President Arroyo's professional interest for better access to health services especially for the poor is best manifested in Philhealth's coverage of 16 million indigent members through the Oxygen Medicines Act, medicines are more affordable with prices of thirteen essential medicines now 50% cheaper;

Whereas, in terms of education, President Arroyo's stewardship has built a total of 63,000 classrooms from 2004 to June 2009, averaging 14,000 classrooms per year or 1,166 classrooms per month. 1,400 barangays have elementary schools, 1,400 municipalities have high schools and 61.8 million pupils are receiving students-aids, grants-in-aid, scholarships and educational assistance;

Whereas, under President Arroyo, 41.07% or 37.85% of our barangays are now energized with electricity and 73% of waterless municipalities outside Metro Manila and 77% of waterless communities within Metro Manila have potable water;

Whereas, through the 2001 partnership with the Arroyo Administration, the government is winning the war on terror and criminality, thereby restoring stability, peace and order;

Whereas, the ULAP remains steadfast in and supports President Arroyo's agenda thrust of a more transparent, more accountable and more responsive governance and the Administration's resolve to fight corruption and anti-red-tape drive to improve the bureaucracy;

Whereas, as voice of our people in the provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays, we voice the real sentiments and value the concerns and aspirations of our constituencies who are local and actual beneficiaries of the pro-poor and economic gains of President Arroyo's sound economic policies and social reform programs;

Whereas, the 1.3 Million strong membership of the ULAP unequivocally express their unwavering support and encouragement to President Arroyo to intensify her pursuit of her national development programs amidst the political bickering and criticisms from her detractors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, THAT THE UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES COMMENDS PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO FOR HER REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS AND EXPRESSES ITS UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR AND SOLIDARITY WITH HER ADMINISTRATION IN PUSHING FORWARD THE COUNTRY'S PROGRESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Done this 28th day of July 2009 at Mandaluyong, Philippines.

ULAP officers in a gesture of support and full confidence for President Arroyo

Together we can BEAT THE ODDS

Laylo, So keep Asian Zonals 1-2 spots

Standings after seven rounds

1-3 points: 3. Laylo (GM), 4.5. 4. So (GM), 4. Parimarjan (GM), 3. 5. Vito (Vietnam), 4.5. Anh (Vietnam), 4. 6. Sam (Vietnam), 4. Zhang Zhaoqi (Singapore), 4. Mai (Malaysia), 3. Wesley So (Philippines), 4. Ian (Vietnam), 4. Tan (Vietnam), 4. Tuan (Vietnam), 4.5. Sam (Vietnam), 3. Dinh (Vietnam), 3. Ronald (Mongolia).

HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM – THREE-time Olympian Darwin Laylo destroyed Asian Grandmaster Rogelio Antonio Barcenilla of Indonesia in the seventh round on Monday to tighten his grip of the lead in the 2009 Asian Zone 3.3 chess championships here.

Laylo also drew with GM Nguyen Ngoc Truong Son of Vietnam in the sixth round to boost his chances for the title as well as for one of two World Cup slots at stake in the tournament.

The 28-year-old Laylo climbed to 6.0 points, a full point ahead of compatriot GMs Wesley So and Mark Paragua and Vietnamese Bui Nguyen Duy Minh and Truong Tan Anh.

"I'll do my best in the next two rounds," said Laylo, the country's lone bet in the 39th World Cup. "I hope to win the title and make it again to the World Cup."

The top-seeded he settled for back-to-back draws with second seed GM Zhang Zhong of Singapore in the sixth round and Paragua in the seventh round to remain within striking distance with 5.0 points.

Before drawing with So, Paragua defeated erstwhile co-leader Hua Ban of Vietnam in the sixth round.

Hoy and Zhong also drew their match in the seventh round to remain as the highest placed Vietnamese players in the tournament.

Laguna mowed online: 10 holes of snapping up the girls' 13-11 decisive crown, even though Brookes stayed in touch with a 14B after a 7.5.

Canadian 10-under Henderson fired a second straight 75 to tie in third spot with 150, two ahead of Ashley Carlson of Illinois who shot a 76.

Filipino-Swiss ICT Ellis Sarah Maika recovered from a first-round 75 with a 72 but remained 10 strokes off Thai Pantita Pasakul (68) in the girls' 14-15 category.

Legaspi ahead by 2 in Florida

CLARE ANGELIA LEGASPI MATCHED par 72 for the second straight day to grab a two-stroke lead over fourball Elena Brookes heading into the final round of the Optimist International Junior Golf Championships at the PGA National Resort and Spa in Florida on Sunday.

Legaspi, a two-time winner of the World Championship in 10 Kids Golf, blew a one-under card after nine holes for nine of 35-37.

With a 144 total, the bespectacled

Stags smother Great Danes; Generals up

By Cedrolf P. Tupaz

SAN SEBASTIAN TURNED ITS SHOWDOWN WITH LETTERS ANGELES University Foundation into a virtual weekend as the Stags cruised to a 87-65 triumph yesterday to regain the solo lead in the 85th NCAA men's basketball tournament.

Wasting up for their highly anticipated duel with powerhouse Jose Rizal U on Monday, the unbeaten Stags led by as many as 31 points early in the third quarter en route to their sixth straight victory at the FIBOD Flying V Arena in San Juan.

"I'm happy that our hard work in practice is paying off," said San Sebastian's rookie coach Aric Aguirre, who had five players, led by Jimbo Aquino with 21 points, in double figures. "We're not finished at a mark."

Aguirre said he reminded his players not to take the Great Danes for granted, pointing out how a last-placed team like University of the Philippines stunned defending UAAP champion and erstwhile unbeaten Ateneo last Sunday.

Game scores Emilio Aguinaldo College-Cavite registered consecutive wins for the first time by turning back determined St. Benilde, 79-73, behind Rod Ashajhey.

The Generals rolled on Raul Julay-bay's frantic plays in the final period to drown shorthanded St. Benilde, 78-73, in the first game.

Julay-bay's Ashajhey grabbed six offensive rebounds and scored 10 of his 12 points in the fourth period as the Generals rallied from 60-64 deficit to the fourth period to improve to 2-4.

The Blazers lost key players Jun Tan and Chuck Gabisan in the second quarter after the two players were ejected following the bench clearing a scuffle involving team Mar Abducton and EAC's Russell Yap.

Jeff Manalad also emerged tumbling keep the Blazers in the game by unloading a season-high 31 points, including 25 in the second half.

In Juniors' action, defending champion San Sebastian improved to 5-1 after blasting AUB 113-23, while St. Benilde picked up its second in 3-4 with an 85-57 bashing of FAC, 89-67.

EAC's Zhan Dolores (red jersey) and St. Benilde's Jeff Muñal dive for the loose ball as Blazer Christian dela Paz looks on.

Baycats, Icons extend Naascu win streak to 5

By Marc Anthony Reyes and Jasmine W. Payo

TWO SQUADS SUFFERED THEIR HOT streaks to five matches after the San Sebastian-Carlos Bayscats went by Exhibition and the Cebu-mates International College Icons overpowered their foes in the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) over the weekend at the San Sebastian gym in Cavite City.

The defending champion Bayscats were declared the winner by forfeiture after opponent Philippine Christian University (PCU) failed to show up for the match.

Leonard Santos, meanwhile, paced the Icons' balanced attack with 13 points to thump Osteopreneurs ng Lungsod ng Pasay Eagles, 75-67. All but one of 14 Icons scored in the game where they eased away from a 50-34 lead.

Renzo Ingco powerhouse University of Manila also flashed its old form, with John Almeberg unloading 24 points to power the Metals past last season's runner-up and 2007 champions ITE-College Olympians, 73-62.

Meanwhile, first-time championship hopeful Immaculate Conception Lyceum improved to 4-0 after it overcame a late rally by the Generals' Lyceum-U Scorpions to their opening game.

The Olympians, who bowed to the Bayscats in last year's finals, lay fourth at 3-1.

CSU hammered out an 85-66 rout of winless University of Makati, while AMA Computer University tripped St. Clare College-Calamba, 74-68, for its second win.

In the low high school series, the Junior Bayscats backed out a 52-48 triumph over the Junior Scorpions.

Ateneo-La Salle Golf Classic limits field to 320 players

THE 32ND EDITION OF THE Ateneo-La Salle Golf Classic tees off this weekend in the Candelaria Hotels and Resorts course with a first-in-eight division cap for golfers.

Organizers said interest was still sign up for slots in the final week which brings together the top golfers from both schools.

Entry fee is P1,200 for Ateneo-La Salle members and P2,700 for non-members, inclusive of two mulligans, giveaways, lunch and raffle ticket.

To determine classification as well as compute the net scores, July handicap indices will be used. Those without handicap certification will play in the Open class.

The shotgun start limits the field to 160 players per category.

For inquiries, call 426-5940, 911-0972, or fax 426-5941. Interested players can also visit the Ateneo-La Salle Golf Classic Facebook page.

Heat coach blows into town

MIAMI HEAT'S FILIPINO-AMERICAN HEAD coach Erik Spoelstra and two other members arrived yesterday to hold cage clinics as part of the US Department of State Sports Diplomacy Program.

Former US Women National Basketball Association all-star Sue Wicks, now the assistant coach of the St. Francis College Terriers, and Miami assistant coach David Patrick came with Spoelstra, who took over from Pat Riley last year.

The sports ambassadors are to hold clinics for players in selected colleges and high schools, several school youth players, and professional rugger and cowboys in Manila and Cotabato.

They also will meet with officials of schools, athletic associations and professional groups.

The clinics in Metro Manila start at 2:15 p.m. tomorrow at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in Manila.

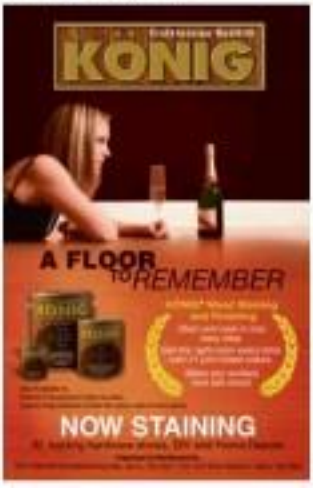
There will be two clinics on Thursday – at 9:15 a.m. at the La Salle Green Hills gymnasium and at 2 p.m. at the San Beda gym in Mendiola, Manila.

Clinics will also be held at the San Andres gym at 2 p.m. on Friday and at 9 a.m. on Saturday.

The Sports Diplomacy Program is designed to engage youth in discussions on how successful athletes can be translated into the development of life skills and achievement in the classroom.

The experience also provides Americans the opportunity to learn about foreign cultures.

COACH ERIK Spoelstra waits for his luggage at the NAIA yesterday.



Save RP boxing from these anomalies

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THERE IS MANNY PACQUIAO, THERE'S now a Gerry's demand for Filipino fighters to appear in international cards.

Pacquiao indeed has been of great help in pushing the careers of other Filipino boxers who regularly receive the RP superstar on their call-ing card.

But, hey, there's also one inescapable offshoot of his popularity which Pacquiao should find time to prevent.

There should be an immediate stop to the rapine of certified Filipino pugilists who end up sharing the image of the Filipino losers abroad.

* * *

The case of boxster Rolando Jabo outlasted another stoppage in his fourth attempt at a world title in Denver, Alaska, on Sunday, sum-ses eventually to say the least.

Rolando was pulled out of the ninth round of his challenge against WBA light flyweight champion Ulaanbaar Arigaan.

In his lamentable revelation, Rolando spoke some, Rolando revealed to his kinfolks, if not to an unknowing news media a while hearing-ing.

He had an ominous representing Pacquiao's beloved Philippines, if his handlers, say, had some sense of patriotism left to distinguish-guishers.

* * *

Rolando constituted gravity in shaking the belief of the international audience on the 10-piso issues.

Now at home, fight fans would see help for protest to disbelief.

"Why was he there, hello president?" groused Bobby Ramos, main man around the Mandaluyong sun maker once senior ref Gen Ademning Sison.

Although Rolando would be pacific with reclaimed, his handlers should've made sure he could conquer gallantly, said Ramos, together with his buddy Mang Inasal.

* * *

Rolando was not an isolated case.

Last month, there was the abominable night of a pumped-up Fernando Consuegra taunting his back beside the ring, to fall view of an international audience.

And to think that all he absorbed was a small punch.

There was a subsequent incredible subconscious which said the reward's real cause was for inside the Lanzarad.

Naturally, there was also widespread belief that he could see he, in any way related to the way Bobby Manlig formated, who fought at the great Speed Coliseum.

* * *

Anyway, knowing Pacquiao and how much he loves his country, he surely will not take all this sitting down.

In fact, Vice Gov. Manny Pilot, a pioneer Pacquiao supporter who's credited for his ring career, the governor-secretary of North Cotabato has gamely launched a campaign to enhance the image of the Pinoy fighter internationally.

Pilot said the in-coxers yesterday that MD. CDN will air on Studio 23 starting Aug. 1 a now weekly professional boxing program, "Entertainment Cotabato. It will feature young and aspiring Filipino boxers.

It will be aired every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and will also be exported on ABS-CBN's international network, The Filipino Channel, which is widely viewed in large Filipino communities in the United States, Europe and the Middle East.

* * *

To make sure viewers will not end up clutching the wrong remote, Pacquiao will be recorded and edited for wholesome, cocking viewing.

Most of the fighters we will largely announced that they have potentials of becoming champions in the future, Pilot explained.

"That is part of what we do, we show the world that there is more to Philippine boxing than just Manny Pacquiao, that after him there will be other young Filipino boxing talents who could carry the nation's flag in the field of professional boxing," he added.

Swine flu risk won't stop RP bid in Asian tilt

By Jane Hanawo

THE PHILIPPINES WILL COMPETE IN the 1st Asian Khalid Aziz Games on Aug. 1 to 9 in Bangkok despite the growing number of influenza A(H1N1) cases in Thailand.

Thirty athletes accompanied by 12 coaches in nine combat sports are scheduled to leave this Friday with Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. expressing confidence that they will be safe.

"I'm sure the Thai can host the Singaporean managed to do it certainly the safety is also among the issues South Games," said Cojuangco. "And if the Thai do the same, I think we will be safe."

Cojuangco noted that health officials in Singapore monitored people going in and out of the competition venues with thermal scanners and other precautionary measures.

Cojuangco said people who showed flu-like symptoms were immediately isolated by health authorities and placed under quarantine for seven days.

Based on Internet reports, the public health ministry in Bangkok said that 98 people have died from the A(H1N1) virus. The figure is almost double the 24 deaths recorded last week.

The ministry in its weekly report, also said there are 6,776 cases of A(H1N1) infections across the country.

The Filipinos—who will compete in taekwondo, karatedo, kumdo, judo, kickboxing, wushu, sambo and hung-ki-kwan—are also assigned to host their pre-competitive camp in the Southeast Asian Games in Laos this December.

Philippine Sports Commission chairman Harry Angping has expressed reservations over the PSI campaign, which the agency is funding.

"Singapore is different from Thailand. The Singaporeans are clean," he said.

"If I had a choice, I might not send our athletes there for health risk reasons. But what can I do, I might be misinterpreted again if I go against their (POC) wishes."

The PH delegation will be headed by Jeddo chief Jose Cuerva in chief de mission.

CONTADOR: "Especially difficult Tour for me" AP/EPA

Contador's Tour dynasty certain

Armstrong settles for third

PARIS—ALBERTO CONTADOR WON THE Tour de France for a second time Sunday, and Lance Armstrong capped his return to the race with an impressive third-place finish.

Mark Cavendish of Britain collected his ninth stage win of this year's Tour in a sprint after the 3,044-kilometer (193.39-mile) race to ends from Montereau-Fault-Yonne to the Champs-Elysees.

Over nearly 3,500 kilometers and 21 stages, including one in the Pyrenees, Contador repelled many challenges in the mountains, overlled in the two time-trials—winning a pivotal one against the clock in the 18th stage—and won the first Alpine stage.

Andy Schleck of Luxembourg, Contador's biggest rival among title contenders in the mountains, was runner-up overall.

Contador, the 2007 champion, also had to battle a suspected active within his his team mate, where the comeback of Armstrong to the Tour after 3½ years of retirement raised questions about who would be the team leader.

"It has been an especially difficult Tour for me, but I never to and it is more special because of it," Contador said after the podium ceremony.

The subtext to the race was the open tension between Armstrong and Contador within Astana—a battle of egos between a proven cycling giant and another making his strong case that he's one, too.

The body language on the winner's podium said it all. In his standard pose the victor's stage, Armstrong gave a perfunctory handshake to Contador, then heartily shook Schleck's hand.

The quintessential American competitor cast a long sideways glance at the victor's hand as Contador took it. Armstrong only gave a quick glance at his own crystal trophy. AP

Roberts wrests 2nd Sr British Open title

STONEHOUSE, ENGLAND—GORDY Roberts of the United States won his second playoff hole before Roberts Sunday Mark McNulty on the third hole of a sudden-death playoff.

Fred Funk also took part in the playoff in hunningham, but the American one was eliminated on the first extra hole when he would only make par at Roberts and McNulty birdied.

The remaining pair passed the second playoff hole before Roberts clinched victory with another par at the sixth.

Roberts, who won in 2000 at Turnberry, and Funk each shot a 67 in the final round, 9 under par.

Bernhard Langer (68) was fourth with Jose Rafaner (69) fifth. Overnight leader Greg Norman (71) and Lucy Mair (82) were seven.

Roberts thought he had lost it on the second playoff hole after missing an 8-foot birdie attempt, but McNulty drove into heavy rough on the next hole and bogeyed.

"I thought that was a real great chance I'd get every," Roberts said. "I got my swashed with the line and had a good speed."

Roberts' victory earned him a spot in next year's British Open at St. Andrews.

Tom Watson had his best putting round of the week, but a 67 left him tied for eighth place. But he said at least he had resolved the pudding problem that had plagued him, and he was looking forward to this week's U.S. Senior Open at Crooked Stick, Indiana.

Roberts said the aspect of his game that pleased him most was his second approach.

"I've been struggling most with a little bit this year," he said. "I haven't been getting the ball as much on the good action, I didn't give up mentally today. I didn't let the normal side get me down when I hit behind early.

"I've been doing some physical things, making some adjustments here and there. At my age I don't know if my body is changing a little bit. But I've been just trying to see if I can do a little better with what I have." AP

ROBERTS: Mentally tough

Ex-world champ Forrest shot dead

ATLANTA—FORMER WORLD BOXING champion Vinson Forrest was shot dead in Atlanta, the victim of an apparent robbery, city authorities and local media said on Sunday.

Forrest, who lost heroin his coming re-upset in 2001 against then WBC welterweight champion Shane Mosley,...argued by stung as the world's best fighter at the time—and hunting two spots on rematches here.

Forrest, who was found in Atlanta, was a world champion in the welterweight and light middleweight divisions and who fought for the United States at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

"The cause of death is multiple gunshot wounds involving the torso and thighs, and the manner of death is homicide," the chief medical examiner of Georgia's Fulton county said in a statement.

Forrest was shot on Saturday at his third to prevent people from stealing his car at a gas station in southwest Atlanta. Reuters

Veteran Cebuana runner nails lone Milo finals slot

CAGAYAN DE ORO City—triumphal, veteran Lerel Sitoza, she nailed the distaff race of the 33rd National Milo Marathon 2.0K elimination here on Sunday extended a tendency for most of breakthrough winner anthony Sabingabing in the men's race.

The 34-year-old Gibraltar, an ore-wearing champion before taking up running in 1995, clocked one hour, 25 minutes and 01 seconds to win her eighth straight 21K elimination race and earn a ticket to the Oct. 11 Manila finals, 1-42K run.

WINNERS: Anthony Sabingabing and Lerel Sitoneba show their trophies. Wide shot: Milo Marathon coordinator Nardino Mankayan (also Mandaluyo (left) and Milo Sports Events Executive Andrew Hart)

The Cebuana dominators, she last finishing Manila, won just one runner-to-the-tortured 5-kilometer stretch Reynaldo Bonoc, who clocked 1:15:54.

Gibraltar said Sunday's race is part of her preparation for the Mt. Kinabalu International Chrysthorium in Malaysia on Oct. 24 and 25.

The Cebu native plans and bunch overall victories, beating Mt. Everest climber Cristina Dionisio and Asian Adventure who secured an 11th and 27th place, respectively.

Sabingabing placed 11th in the same Milo elimination race last year but, despite his vast improvement and the P150,000 cash prize, the 26-year-old Bukidnon native was unhappy.

"I prepared hard for this because I wanted to win the Manila finals," said Sabingabing.

Completing the winners list are three-time big winner Rodilo Smallan (1:10:14) and 2008 champ Arnold Sardina (1:17:14) in the men's race and Jennelyn Bardillo (1:40:47) and Helen Tarlac (1:42:30) in the distaff side.

The 10K winners were Rodel Pareto Sandino (35:20) and Lubina Pascua (47:41) while topping the 5K fun run were Raoul Ben (17:15) and Jocelyn Gilmonia (21:08).

Bakbakan 10-stag derby dangles P30M

A RECORD GUARANTEED PRIZE POT OF FIVE million is at stake in the 2009 Annual Bakbakan National 10-Stag Derby hosted by the National Federation of Sugarcane Planters (NFSP) in contention cockpits across the country.

There's a chance (25% to 40% according) to the champion, with all entries coming three wins in the elimination rounds allowing a the P5 million prize. Entries are expected to also through the semifinals will share in the P2 million prize.

Only 10 entries remained will six straight wins for 5-cockpit going into last year's finals.

"Bakbakan is the Filipino breeders' derby and we have put in place a proven system that will ensure fairness and equal winning chance for every participant," said Bacolod Mayor Jose Maloyolo, NFSP vice president for North Luzon.

"Weighted numbers and legitimacy of stags tested on daily authenticated by double checking with our records," said NFSP's Freddie Yulo.

LAW IS AN ADDED INJUSTICE

Mr. William Dagar was presenting a group of horse owners, businessmen, lawyers, trainers, grooms and helpers who greatly affected their livelihood by the implementation of laws and executive orders issued by the Philippine Racing Commission (Philracom).

The claims for him to become their lifty-person (50%) of the members of the horseracing industry to distress economically. The court records showed that only 3 of the 25 horses of Mr. Dagan were affected with EO 6 (Equine Infectious Anemia). He can safely isolate the 3 horses and not his 22 qualified horses run, participate and continue his business. The owners were not responsible towards them because it is not their fault that they are prevented from engaging in the business in the horseracing industry.

Before this, he already once questioned and disagreed with the Philracom board in handling and dealing with the influence of illegal bookies in the horseracing industry. By then, the investigating team from the Philracom legal department, which investigated erring jockeys, had already been disbanded by the chairman. The band-aid solution to investigate erring jockeys was transferred to the Philracom stewards. The Court, according to him, is expanding their control and influence... Embarrassing, ad-hoc, penalties, suspension and other measures can appeal to the Philracom board, headed by the chairman himself.

The Philracom's initial implementation of the EO program was a power display of government officials' abuse of discretion of authority and total disregard of the livelihoods and properties of others. The EO, not was definitely incomplete, inaccurate and not in the proper form. The EO was contradicted by the Philracom's chairman and Philracom board directly to the Philracom, without furnishing the owners a copy. The inconclusive and non-transparent EO was put the horse owners in a disadvantageous position. The EO test was perceived to inadequate the horse owners and therefore pave the way for the total syndication of the horseracing industry, a disguise of eliminating a disease that even the Department of Agriculture directly as an epidemic disease like one can find in dogs and cat. Per 136 AD no. 17). Has the issue in the horseracing industry been resolved? Definitely not. The Philracom is the one who is encouraging their enterprise for monitoring purposes. This monitoring policy is exactly taking time in the Philippines that (34 AD no. 5).

Mr. William Dagar filed the case of maleviolation of public funds against the former chairman and he listed on a separate issue. The former chairman was administratively discharged from public office. The criminal aspect of the case was forwarded at the Ombudsman. But the search for justice is more than 200 million losses of livelihood and properties and the life opportunities of horseracing industry.

The Philracom is under the Office of the President. The group, realizing the urgency of the matter, approached the executive office but the Palace never seriously acted on the matter to resolve the issue. The Office of the President don't want to interfere simply because that, it was a known fact fully controlled by one of its political allies in the Arroyo's administration of this administration. This is one of the problems in a computerized government, a selective implementation and not equal to all. The Philracom is a great example of the Philracom's chairman and Philracom board directly to the people. The call for good governance and effective public service are totally unattainable with this. With the Makabayang's tendency to act seriously on the matter, the group had no choice but to file a case (C.B. No. 170205) and challenge the legitimacy and long process case in court, while all the horses involved already died or passed their prime to compete anymore.

The group lawyers raised the issue that with respect to administrative rules and regulations, the Revised Administrative Code of 1987 requires government agencies to publish and file copies thereof with the University of the Philippines Law Center for effectiveness. Philracom did not file copies of the issued rules at U.P. Diliman Center as required by law to render said rules effective and enforceable. The Supreme Court en banc, in its decision totally ignored and isolated this argument. It is especially decided case of Ortiz-Nebrada, Inc., vs. Mayor and Sangguniang Panlungsod of Davao, G.R. No. 138810 promulgated on September 29, 2000. Philracom did not file copies of its revised rules at U.P. Diliman Center as required by law to render said rules effective and enforceable. The Supreme Court en banc, in its decision totally ignored and isolated this argument. It is especially decided case of Ortiz-Nebrada, Inc., vs. Mayor and Sangguniang Panlungsod of Davao, G.R. No. 138810 promulgated on September 29, 2000. Philracom did not file copies of its revised rules at U.P. Diliman Center as required by law to render said rules effective and enforceable. The Supreme Court en banc, in its decision totally ignored and isolated this argument. It is especially decided case of Ortiz-Nebrada, Inc., vs. Mayor and Sangguniang Panlungsod of Davao, G.R. No. 138810 promulgated on September 29, 2000. Philracom did not file copies of its revised rules at U.P. Diliman Center as required by law to render said rules effective and enforceable. The Supreme Court en banc, in its decision totally ignored and isolated this argument. It is especially decided case of Ortiz-Nebrada, Inc., vs. Mayor and Sangguniang Panlungsod of Davao, G.R. No. 138810 promulgated on September 29, 2000.

Mr. William Dagar is continuously supporting the horse racing industry by annually fulfilling and sponsoring the Juanito Gimenez Cup. The owners, which names the working members of the horseracing industry, is one on its seventh year.

"What shall I profit a man...if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"
(Mark 8:36)

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DID YOU KNOW

The fortification of Manila in the 16th century was a response to attacks by Chinese pirate Limahong, who desired the city's gold and silver. *Cyril L. Bautista, Inquirer Research*

NBI files credit card fraud rap against dentist

Patient says doc charged P1.2M to his card without telling him

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE NATIONAL BUREAU of INVESTIGATION (NBI) HAS FILED a charge of credit card fraud against a dentist who allegedly charged P1.2 million to her patient's credit card without his knowledge.

NBI Special Task Force (STF) chief Arnel Dalanginen said that Dr. Sheila Theresa Galenzoga, the owner and chief managing director of Dental First Oral Health Care Center in Dolgion Center, Pasig City, was accused of violating Republic Act 8484 or the Access Device Regulations Act of 1998 before the Department of Justice on Friday.

Six transactions

Earlier, Abril Joel Linares, Allied Banking Corp. authorization and fraud management center assistant manager, filed a complaint against Galenzoga after a bank canvasser, Harry Tan Sr., questioned six transactions totalling P1.2 million which were charged to his credit card.

Based on bank records, the transactions were carried out on March 13. Tan, however, told the bank that he did not use his credit card in Galenzoga's dental clinic on that day.

He also claimed that the signatures on the charge slips were not his.

Request denied

Dalanginen said the bank immediately conducted an investigation into Tan's complaint but the dental clinic denied Linares's request that the bank be provided with copies of Tan's dental records.

The bank records showed that six transactions worth P200,000 each were charged to Tan's credit card on March 13.

When accosted several times about the transactions, Dalanginen added, was that these were done all on the same day and within minutes of each other.

He said that when summoned by the NBI, Galenzoga denied the allegations against her and invoked doctor-patient privilege for her refusal to give the bureau a copy of Tan's March 13 dental record.

AT REST
A boy walks on Commonwealth Avenue, past the shields and truncheons of anti-riot policemen naked with keeping protesters away during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address at the House of Representatives. MICHAEL VARCAS

UNUSUAL SIGHT
The stretch of Roxas Boulevard from Manila to Pasay City is empty of vehicles after the road was closed to vehicular traffic for the 95th anniversary celebration of the Iglesia ni Cristo. ARCHIVE

Robbery victim Tara Santelices dies of heart failure days before birthday

By DJ Yap

ANTONIA SHARINA "TARA" SANTELICES, the young woman who resisted a purse robber and ended up getting shot in the head, last year, died of heart failure yesterday, just days short of her 24th birthday.

Larry, Tara's father, said his daughter succumbed to cardiac arrest at around 4 a.m. at the Medical City in Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

"She had a kidney infection that led to heart failure, and it all started from there," Larry said.

On Tuesday, Santelices developed a high fever and a cough. Her condition started to deteriorate, prompting her parents to rush her to the hospital.

"We had no inkling. It was a shock to all of us," Larry told the Inquirer, speaking in Filipino.

Since the attack on her, Santelices had not been able to communicate with her family although Larry said he could see from her eyes how she had suffered. "For both of us, maybe this is for the best," he said.

But her father said Tara's death did not mean the end of the family's quest for justice.

"We will ask the National Bureau of Investigation to review her case," he said.

A political science graduate from Ateneo de Manila University, Santelices, on the morning of her 23rd birthday on Aug. 6, 2008, asked a friend to meet her at a fast food restaurant on Marcos Highway.

She and Joyce Elaine Mejias, both part of the all-girl band Saffron Speedway, then took a ride home to Cainta where they found themselves getting sent to a man who appeared drunk.

The man pulled out a gun and announced a holdup. Santelices instinctively resisted when the man grabbed her bag, and the man shot her in the face before fleeing with his loot, according to the police. She was in a coma in the hospital for three weeks before she woke up and was allowed to go home.

The Cainta police later reported that her attacker was killed in a shootout on Sept. 15 and declared the case closed. Her family, however, later disputed this, citing the discrepancies in the appearance of the slain man and the description of the killer based on witnesses' accounts.

Ombudsman sacks 3 fire officials

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FOR ALLEGEDLY FAKING THEIR school records when they sought government service, three officials of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) have been ordered dismissed by the Office of the Ombudsman.

In a recent decision, Senior Supt. Gil dela Paz, Inspector Supt. Danilo Uriz and Chief Insp. Eduard Tendencilla were also barred from working for the government, while their retirement benefits were likewise forfeited.

Jacinto used to be assigned at the BFP national office. On the other hand, Uriz was with the Muntinlupa City Fire Station while Tendencilla used to be a member of the Daraj City Fire Station.

"Respondents' retention do not only constitute falsification but likewise dishonesty. The blatant dishonesty [and] purposely designed by the respondents to gain entry [to] the government service," graft investigation and prosecution officer Rebecca Gallos-Ulanday said in the decision.

The case stemmed from an anonymous complaint lodged with the Office of the Ombudsman's first Finding Investigation Bureau.

The complainant alleged that Jacinto did not finish college although his personal data sheet (PDS) indicated that he was a graduate of Manuel L. Quezon University (MLQU).

It also alleged that Ortiz was only a high school graduate even if he had indicated in his PDS that he finished college at the Laguna North-western College and that Tendencilla also did not finish college despite his declaration that he had graduated from Holistic University.

In his defense, Jacinto said that the complaint against him was just a rehash of another one that had already been dismissed by the Ombudsman.

He also submitted a special order issued by the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education that certified that he was a graduate of Manuel L. Quezon University (MLQU).

Ortiz, meanwhile, said the complaint "was filed handiwork of a disgruntled ex-officer who has an ax to grind" against him and five co-respondents. He said he never claimed that he finished college in Laguna Northwestern College and instead said the National Police Commission had declared him as "unconditional eligible graduate."

Tendencilla, on the other hand, failed to submit his counter-affidavit.

But in its decision, the Ombudsman said Jacinto failed to submit other supporting documents to bolster his claim while Cruz had testified in his PDS that he had graduated from the Laguna Northwestern College, which also sent his academic records during the investigation.

The Office of the Ombudsman, however, doubted the authenticity of the records since Ortiz himself had declared that he did not attend that school.

MASS FOR CORY
A Makati traffic enforcer prays earnestly during the first day of a nine-day novena for former President Corazon Aquino held at the Makati City Hall grounds. AP/VOY KEA

Taguig police deploy cops to C-5 Road to deter thieves

By Miss Cathrine Cabeja

THE TAGUIG CITY POLICE HAVE deployed at least 20 policemen to C-5 Road to deter stone-throwing robbers who prey on motorists.

"The deployment resulted in [a] drop [in] crime incidents in the past months," Senior Supt. Camilo Cascolan, city police chief said recently.

He, however, admitted that deploying policemen on a 24-hour basis in the area was not possible due to a lack of manpower.

Eight new policemen on board patrol cars can only watch the area from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Cascolan said their duty is was identified as Taguig police chief in November 2008. There has been a significant decline in criminal incidents in the area.

"But [before that], [we] recorded five to six incidents a month," he added.

The bureau sought Cascolan for unusual office working on overall which consisted a woman accused of her the 3rd husband and 6-year-old daughter were nearly murdered by two men who threw acids at their as as they were traveling on C-5 Road on Father's Day.

Fortunately, the stone missed the vehicle by inches.

In the second incident, a man driving on the road was victimized by two guys who threw a can at his car, shattering one of the windows. The men, however, managed to deter to a nearby police station where attendant helped him.

Cascolan, meanwhile, asked the public to report crimes by e-mailing taguigcitypolice@yahoo.com.ph.

METROBRIEFS

Actor Diether Ocampo airs side

THE WATCH orbiting station reportedly owned by actor Diether Ocampo was sold two years before the Social Security Act of 2013 filed a case against him for allegedly violating social security laws, in a statement sent to the location. Ocampo's lawyer, Maureen Palomino, said the Life Returns orbiting station in Batangas Bagong Pag-asa was sold in February 2006 to Sandra Ramos. She added that her clientele not received a copy of the complaint filed against him by the BSS before the Quezon City Prosecutors Office. "After executing the deed of sale, [Ocampo] thought things would be done automatically [and] that papers or documents under his name would be cancelled," Palomino said. The blotthrough account office Pagtu-Ramos, last week filed a complaint against Ocampo for failing to pay the receivables of the members of the water refilling station during a routine BSS inspection in May 2008.

Jaleh M. Bernabe

MMDA to present 15 workers to police

FIFTEEN employees of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) accused of involvement in the death of a vendor during a commuter-clearing operation over the weekend will be presented to a police lineup today. The MMDA tentatively promised to present those involved in the demolition today," Chief Insp. Benjamin Gascon of the Quezon City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, said yesterday. Police are investigating the death of 51-year-old vendor during a clearing operation conducted by MMDA personnel on Congressional Road, Quezon City on Sunday. Eyewitnesses said Cecilio Orasel, 48, was punched by an MMDA worker during a confrontation, causing the victim to fall and hit his head on the pavement. He died of head injuries at a nearby hospital.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Alphan Exemplar Awards set tomorrow

PHILCHAMBER chief executive officer Jose P. Ortiz will receive the Alphan Exemplar Award from the JP Rizal/Philippine Publishing Alphan/Recognition for Business 1960 to 1969 and Networking night tomorrow, July 29. The event will be held at the Intramuros Hall of Club Filipino in San Juan City. The other awardees are Prof. Benjamin S. Manipo Jacinto S. Aguirre, businessman Edgar T. Chipeco, Enrique Antonio Garcia II (posthumous), lawyer Renato B. Valmonte, columnist Nelson J. Navarro, entrepreneur Henry H. Villarica, former Rep. Stanley Lilian and lawyer Estrellita D. Rivera. Last Chancellor Sen. Oscar Fernandez will confer the Alphan Exemplar Awards.

Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, Manila

IGLESIA NI CRISTO DAY
Show of the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex from within (pronounced) shows a mammoth crowd of about 4 million INC delegates from the Metro Manila North, Metro Manila South, and Rizal Extension/Cluster who gathered for a special religious service to commemorate the 95th anniversary of the INC. (The Arcanta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City also overflowed with INC over 25,000 delegates at the same date.)

Darius Razon tells police thieves' loot totaled P5M

By Oj Yap

MANDALUYONG COUNCILOR and former mayor Evelyn Reyes said the city police he was missing P500,000 after his house was robbed by four persons including three boys, on Sunday morning.

Senior Supt. Carlos de Sagun, Mandaluyong police chief, said Razon made the claim in his sworn statement yesterday although the councilor had said several hours earlier that only "P100, something" had been stolen.

De Sagun said they had presented at least three boys, including one named "Vincent, to Razon based on his description of the culprits but he failed to positively identify any of them.

The councilor told investigators the robbers, three of whom seemed to be below 20 years old and the last in his 40s, had worn masks and appeared to be "teenagers."

De Sagun said it was evident that the thieves had managed to gain entry to the house, considering that there was no forced entry which apparently did not look when they barged into the house.

The official added that it was also to note that the suspects did not take the expensive wine bottles and pieces of jewelry that were in Reyes's room and opted to take only his cell phone and cash.

MyVote.MyTurn.

HOW I WILL DECIDE

The Inquirer keeps me informed. The 2010 election is really about _____ (HOT TOPIC 1)

_____ ,

Our next president needs to be someone capable of _____ (CHARACTER TRAIT)

like _____ (POLITICAL HERO), and not

capable of _____ (POLITICAL SCANDAL).

No one knows for sure what will happen. But I will make my vote happen.

NAME:
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Fill out, Clip. **Send** to **2010electionsinq@inquirer.com.ph. Fax** to **897 4011.**
Or send **SMS**: Type 2010 Name/Address/Hot Topic/Character Trait/Political Hero/Political Scandal and send to **0918 888 5566.**

INQUIRER

Monthly, our Research Department will collate the results which will be posted in the issues. Entries filled with good-thinking/eureka ideas/innovative approach/creative opinion will receive surprise prizes.

Are government agents dumb?

ON TARGET

Raymund Tuffy

AS THE COLUMN WAS BEING WRITTEN, President Ghola had not yet delivered his true State of the Nation address.

But we confess how incredible the rhetoric this talent into his speech, people will never forget the massive corruption in his administration.

People will not forget the big scandals such as the grossly overpriced NBN-ZTE project, the P700-million fertilizer fund diversion and the grossly overpriced North-Rail's civil projects that have stranded for administration.

He can't claim she didn't know about these scandals because her husband, Mike Arroyo, was allegedly involved.

As a former official of the Arroyo administration told me when I said that the President probably didn't know what we have heard was wrong. "Mom, don't be naive. Ghola and Mike have their own pocket."

So, it was a good-cop, bad-cop routine. Ghola playing the good cop and Mike the bad cop.

* * *

In the first few days of her presidency, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo told Executive Secretary Ermita, "I will try to be a good president."

GMA has given a different meaning to the word "good."

She's the worst of all the country's presidents after Marcos, even making Erap whom she replaced look like a plus to comparison.

* * *

We, I was once close to the Arroyos but I'm lucky to have disentangled myself from them.

I only have Mike Arroyo's special friend and her brother to thank for our rescued relationship.

If I didn't expose smuggling activities of Mike's special friends, I probably would still be friends with the Arroyos.

I have since learned a lesson in journalism: But there are no friends when public interest is involved.

* * *

Ex-Supt. Glenn Rambo, who was a "hit man" of the notorious but now disbanded Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), is back in the country.

Rambo and ex-Senator Supt. Cesar Mancao will testify against their former boss at PAOCTF, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, in the twin murders of publicist Bubby Dacer and driver Emmanuel Corbito.

Rambo and Mancao give treats to the media that will whet their appetite.

Eventually, the criminal will have to pay for his evil deed.

* * *

There is no perfect crime.

If one escapes punishment for his crime from the judicial system, sooner or later the criminal will be his karmic debt.

Karma's or poetic justice is inevitable.

Many years ago when I was a reckless and irresponsible teenager, I took part in hurling up a drunk whom only inch was to walk dying in the opposite direction.

The guy didn't do anything to me and to my friends. Like him we were also drunk.

A few years later, a couple of drunks picked me up from a crowd resulting for a fight from and gauged up on me.

The survivors finds a way for you to make amends for your misdeeds.

* * *

How did Filipino-American Melissa Roxas know that the guys who abducted and tortured her were from the government and not from the New People's Army (NPA)?

She was blindfolded the whole time and relied on her hearing to identify her tormentors.

She said she heard shots and surmised the place where she was held was near a firing range.

She said she heard planes landing and taking off and surmised the place could have been near an airstrip.

Because of the firing and the sounds of planes, she surmised she was held inside a military camp?

So all we know, she could have been abducted by NPA rebels, held in a house near a military camp or she would say was taken underneath the earth.

If government agents abducted her why would they take her to a place that would give them away?

Are government agents that dumb?

The WORLD

Edita Lawrence B. Gonzalez

Rich countries corner swine flu vaccine

PARIS—GOVERNMENTS ARE SCRAMBLING TO buy up hundreds of millions of doses of swine flu vaccine but health experts warn the poor may lose out as wealthy countries corner strictly limited supplies.

The World Health Organization has unofficially estimated that the world's labs may only be able to produce around 900 million doses for the A(H1N1) strain per year, for a planet that is home to 6.8 billion people.

Global pharmaceutical companies are more optimistic about how much of the drug they can produce but, even such potential victim needs two doses, most of the world's population will inevitably miss out.

And there are already signs that the wealthiest countries will snap up more than their fair share in the rush to halt the outbreak, while Africa, Asia and Latin America will struggle to secure adequate amounts of vaccine.

"The lion's share of these limited supplies will go to wealthy countries. Again we see the advantage of affluence. Again our services denied by an inability to pay," WHO Director Margaret Chan said last week.

France, for example, placed a firm order for 94 million doses of vaccine doses and an option for 34 million more, meeting in full its wishes. It hopes to be able to protect each and every member of its population of 61 million.

The United States has set aside at least a billion dollars to buy vaccine, and Britain hopes to protect at least half of its 60 million population by the start of next year and the other half as soon as possible afterwards.

Australia has also ordered enough vaccine for its 21 million population, and as more rich world countries follow suit the world's potential stock of the drug will soon run out, while prices are set to rise.

"We expressed our concern about being able to count on the vaccine when it starts going on sale," Argentina's Health Minister Juan Manzur said last week after meeting assorted Latin American colleagues.

"We have information that much of the production is already reserved," Pharmaceutical firms are cutting to increase their capacity to produce an A(H1N1) vaccine, case nets confirm that one has been developed, and hope to begin releasing stocks in late September or early October.

But even if they manage to make double the expected 900 million doses per year, this would still fall far short of the amount that would be needed to protect every man, woman and child on the planet from the pandemic.

In these circumstances, some countries and independent experts think the best way forward is for authorities to focus on encountering health workers and the most vulnerable patients in short-to-moderate stocks.

The WHO is negotiating with vaccine producers to restore donations or sales at lower prices for developing countries, while richer nations are being asked to donate some of their vaccine stocks.

Peter Wecker, president of the German Association for the Fight against Viral Diseases, said he thought his country had made the right decision in only looking at immediate around a third of its people. AFP

Sarkozy doing well after collapse

SARKOZY jogging in New York's Central Park on July 17.

PARIS—PRESIDENT NICOLAS Sarkozy was due to leave hospital on Monday after collapsing while jogging, as the French leader's aides scrambled to defend his image as a man of action.

The 54-year-old was admitted to hospital by helicopter Sunday after he fainted while jogging in the wooded parkland around the Versailles Palace near his weekend retreat outside Paris.

Sarkozy's supposedly with Carla Bruni-Sarkozy raced to his side on a golden mountain bike, a witness said, but doctors pronounced his illness a minor nervous complaint brought on by effort and predicted a full recovery.

He was expected to leave the Val-de-Grace military hospital here Monday.

Around 20 journalists were gathered at metal barricades outside the hospital, checked in every detail on the roof and government cars with closed windows were coming and going regularly.

At the moderate, Sarkozy's supporters were furiously working the media to protect his reputation as a dynamic leader.

"The news from the doctors is good. He'll be out today," president Patrick Devedjian, a close ally, charged with overseeing Sarkozy's plans to revive the failing French economy, on RTL radio.

Officials said Sunday that Sarkozy had suffered a vasovagal syncope—a severe condition in which exhaustion and dehydration can lead to a loss of blood pressure—as he ran under a blazing summer sun.

The conditions is not considered dangerous and most patients make a full recovery, and like general's entourage were keen to point out that he never lost consciousness despite 45 minutes of hard physical exercise.

"The doctors are taking about an illness brought on by exercise effort," a source in Sarkozy's office said.

But, while the president is likely to make a full physical recovery and quickly resume his gruelling schedule, there may be more lasting damage to his carefully crafted image as a young, thrusting leader.

Former premiere Francois Mitterand left office aged 78 and concealed a case of prostate cancer for more than a decade. Sarkozy's predecessor Jacques Chirac left office aged 76 and soon spent a week in hospital.

By contrast to his often frail-seeming forebears, Sarkozy has played up his vigor, and is regularly photographed jogging and cycling in his trademark 10PIS T-shirt, sometimes with flattering sportswear.

Writing in the regional newspapers Charente Libre, Dominique Esnouf said voters have no wish to "overthrow if this was Sarkozy's then medical problem."

"No one can know for sure, as long as transparency about the president's health remains a taboo," he said. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

N. Korea says it is open to new dialogue on nukes

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—NORTH KOREA SUGgested it was dialogue Monday to resolve tensions over its atomic weapons program—an apparent invitation to the US to engage in one-on-one talks after Pyongyang bolstered its negotiating power with nuclear and missile tests. Hours earlier, however, US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Pyongyang's visit to Iran raised the North has rejected Clinton said the multilateral framework is "the appropriate way to engage with North Korea," Monday's statement from Pyongyang's Foreign Ministry marks a rare expression of willingness to talk by a regime that has repeatedly bristled with efforts of provocations in recent months, including a nuclear test and a series of banned missile tests. It also suggests that the communist regime thinks it has raised its stakes enough, and it's time to negotiate. AP

Burma court hears final arguments in Suu Kyi case

RANGOON—THE BURMESE JUNTA'S CONdemnation of Burma (Myanmar) democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi neared its climax Monday as lawyers for her two servants added their closing arguments to a prison court. The detained Nobel peace laureate, 64, faces five years in jail on charges of violating her house arrest over a bizarre incident in which an American man, John Yettaw, swam uninvited to her lakeside home in Rangoon's Inyan Lake. AFP

Sarah Palin steps down as Alaska governor

WASILLA, ALASKA—SARAH PALIN stepped down as Alaska governor on Sunday with a fiery speech reminiscent of her days as running mate to Republican presidential candidate John McCain—where she frequently revved up crowds while attacking Democrats and the mass media. On Sunday, Palin took on elitists in the media, Hollywood and the Lower 48 states. As her audience shouted its approval, she mocked reporters for reading things up. mocked Hollywood stars who have opposed small-control programs, and even claimed that "outside special interests still don't get it." AP

Zelaya sees US support waning

OCOTAL, NICARAGUA—SUSPECTED supporters of Manuel Zelaya trickled home from the Nicaraguan border on Sunday and the ousted Honduran president contemplated that US condemnation of his removal from power was waning.

The United States, Latin American governments and the United Nations have demanded Zelaya be returned to power, but US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton cited visas him as "reckless" when he took a five-step route Honduras and on Friday in a symbolic gesture in front of international media.

Zelaya hit back at Clinton for the second time in two days, complaining she had stopped using the term "coup" to describe his removal. "The position of the Secretary Clinton at the beginning was firm. Now I feel that she's not really denouncing (it) and she's not acting firmly against the repression that Honduras is suffering," he told reporters.

Honduran troops morning checkpoints have prevented several thousand demonstrators from staging a show of support for the leftist leader at the border since Friday.

Ten kilometers from the border, 100 weary protesters milled around the coffee town of El Paraiso, a bar try from the massive outpouring of public backing Zelaya had called for.

"We're going to head back to Tegucigalpa where most of the people are," said resident Lilian Dubuson, wiping weary tears.

"We have to change our strategy ... People are angry but we don't have weapons and against a rifle, we can't do anything."

The Honduran Congress and Supreme Court had ousted Zelaya of trying to extend presidential-term limits.

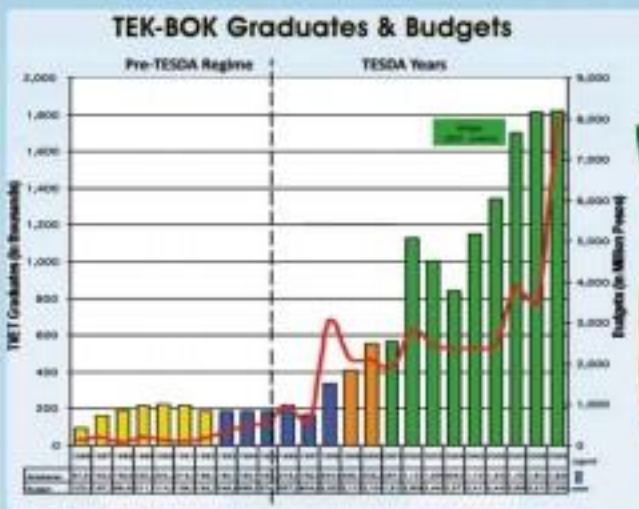
Roberto Micheletti, who was appointed interim president by Congress, said the head of the joint chiefs of staff, Romeo Vasquez Velasquez, say Zelaya's removal was legal since he was acting against the Constitution. The Supreme Court ordered his arrest and Congress backed his removal. AP

"As commander-in-chief of the armed forces, I ask patriotic soldiers to think of their children, think of their families and to rebel against Romeo Vasquez," Zelaya said. Reuters

State of TEK-BOK 2009: Kaalaman, Kagalingan, Kasanayan

Pangulong GLORIA Scholarships

Gaganda ang Buhay Mo!



Matibay ang paniniwala ni Pangulong Gloria Macapagal- Arroyo na ang pamumuhunan sa imprastraktura, agrikultura, at industriya ay higit na napapakilos at nabibigyang bisa sa pamamagitan ng angkop at sapat na imbesment sa tao. Ito ang tunay na magtutulak sa pagsulong tungo sa isang matibay at maunlad na bansa para sa bawat Pilipino.

Sa loob ng siyam (9) na taon ng kasalukuyang administrasyon, mahigit sa 10 milyong manggagawang Pilipino ang nabigyan ng KAALAMAN, KAGALINGAN, at KASANAYAN sa pamamagitan ng pangangasiwa ng TESDA.

Mas mataas nang tatlong daang porsiyento (300%) ang ginugol nito para sa imbesment sa TEK-BOK kung ikukumpara sa labinlimang taon (15) ng mga nakaraan administrasyon.

Halos limo (5) sa bawat sampung tao na nabigyan ng kasanayang TEK-BOK ay nakakapagtrabaho sa loob ng anim ng buwan matapos ang pagsasanay.

Pitumpu't-limang porsiyento (75%) ng mga nagsipagtapos ng kursong Tes-Bok na kumuha ng Competency Assessment ng TESDA ay sertipikado at ginawaran ng National Certificate (NC) o Certificate of Competency (COC).

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Bukod sa pagbibigay ng Scholarships, ang susunod na serbisyo ay JOBS BRIDGING – ang TESDA PREM (PLACEMENT, REFERRAL, INTELLIGENCE, DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT) para sa mga scholar graduates.

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Sa mga TESDA BLUE DESK, bibigyan ang mga scholar graduates ng HOLO CARDS na may unique bar code number. Ito ang magagamit nila sa pagpaskil ng kanilang RESUME sa e-TESDA portal database na maaaksesa ng mga employers sa ating bansa at sa abroad.

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IN THIS ISSUE
- PNOC-EC steps up operations /B2
- Sugar prices seen rising due to high demand /B3

Editor Raul D. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Carrie S. Nuriana

BUSINESS

[illegible] COMPUTER SYSTEMS, INC.

Credit upgrade spurs demand for T-bills

Stocks rise as bomb scare rattles bourse

By Doris C. Dumlao

STOCKS CLIMBED BY 1 PERCENT yesterday, shrugging off the initial rattle on Wall Street, ahead of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Real State of the Nation Address.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange Index gained 58.15 points to close at 2,774.82, partly driven by Manila Electric Co. shares, which posted a record high.

Meralco's share price went up by another 9.7% percent to close at P225 after hitting an intraday peak of P226 apiece—a record in itself.

Yesterday's rally was led by the industrial, financial, property and holding firm counters, which went up by 1.8 percent, 2.7 percent, 2.6 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively.

Shortly after yesterday's trading had ended, authorities ordered an evacuation of the

(TOKEN) B3

BSP: RP may get larger slice of investment pie

By Michelle V. Rosca

EMERGING MARKETS, including the Philippines, may expect a larger piece of the foreign investment pie as soon as investors get over their aversion to risks, spurred by an improvement in the global economic climate, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the United States and other industrial nations would recover from the global downturn, but their growth rate would be slower than pre-crisis levels.

"This will result in a new balance of risk preferences, where some emerging markets would realize as relatively attractive investment alternatives," Tetangco told reporters.

Investors are starting to prefer emerging markets, citing their resilience in the face of an economic crisis, he added.

In the case of the Philippines, he said, the country's financial sector remained virtually unscathed by the global turmoil. Even if there had been tightening of credit standards caused by "risk aversion among lenders," he said, credit was still growing at a double-digit pace.

Also, the banking sector is expected to remain profitable this year, he added.

Another necessary offset and very low interest rates in industrialized nations—which that in the United States already nearing zero—would help make emerging economies more attractive to investors.

Even when the crisis seems to ease, observers said, policymakers in advanced economies could not immediately raise interest rates and reverse all stimulus measures that have been implemented to counter the economic downturn.

The "exit strategy" is likely to be implemented to a gradual manner. As a result, interest rates in the advanced economies would likely remain low for some time.

"So long as fiscal situations are well managed, more investors

(BSP) B2

BTr issued more than what it was programmed to offer

By Rommel W. Dominguez

YIELDS ON TREASURY BILLS YESTERDAY FELL across the board, with the benchmark 91-day issue dropping by 44.8 basis points to an average of 3.85 percent from 4.298 percent, as domestic lenders were still flushed with idle cash.

This development allowed the Bureau of the Treasury to make a rare move of selling more than the programmed borrowing of P8.3 billion in yesterday's auction, hauling a total of P13.9 billion in all three tenors.

The interest rate on the 182-day Treasury bills also went down by 47.6 basis points to 4 percent from 4.478 percent.

The rate of a 364-day loan to the government also decreased by 25 basis points to 4.3 percent from 4.55 percent.

The bellwether issue was oversubscribed by more than six times as investors tendered a total of P32.21 billion.

With such a favorable deal, the BTr awarded P2.4 billion for the three-month debt paper, instead of the planned offer of P1.9 billion.

For the six-month issue, buyers tendered P15.305 billion, or more than five times the offer of P3 billion, but the BTr awarded P4.2 billion.

For the yearlong T-bill, investors tendered P13.76 billion, which was four and a half times the offer of P3.3 billion.

To take advantage of the terms, the Treasury sold P4.9 billion worth of 182-day bills.

National Treasurer Roberto S. Tan said in an interview the market was very liquid, with investors looking for yields higher than what are prevailing in the secondary market.

Tan said the market was awash in investible funds, especially as there were P4.4 billion worth of maturing debt instruments this week.

Investors "seem to be able to (put their money) in available T-bills as they are aggressive," he said. "The impact of Moody's upgrade brought a lot of positive mood."

Tan, who is also finance undersecretary, was referring to the credit rating upgrade undertaken by credit watcher Moody's Investors Services last

(BTR) B2

I GOT MY HAIR BACK.
I'M BACK IN ACTION!

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PNOC-EC steps up operations

VAT collection up 24.6% in first semester

By Rennel M. Domingo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE's value-added tax collection rose by 24.6 percent in the first semester of the year to P98.86 billion from P68.48 billion a year ago, preliminary data showed.

The first semester's VAT take of the government also exceeded the goal for the period of P84.2 billion.

However, income tax and corporate tax collections dropped by 9.1 percent due mainly to tax relief measures that were put in place this year.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Belinda M. Aupe said Dylan Kendall, in the agency's campaign to shut down business establishments that were not paying the right VAT, had helped pick up collections.

Aupe said that in the second quarter alone, the VAT yield rose by an average of 35 percent a month.

Aupe said that in June when the BIR's annual tax take increased by 11 percent, VAT collection showed a 54 percent jump.

The deputy commissioner said 58 establishments had been closed so far after tagging BIR notices to erstwhile their VAT chits.

She said the majority of those enterprises had complied and the orders for temporary closure had been lifted while some were still negotiating for reopening.

Also, the BIR collected in the first half P217.49 billion in net income tax from individuals and corporations, decreasing by P25.24 billion from last year's P229.23 billion.

Income tax collection fell down of the target of P229.97 billion by 5.1 percent or P11.50 billion.

Aupe said this was due to the low economic growth rate of 0.4 percent year-on-year posted in the first quarter.

She said the shortfall was also because of tax relief measures under Republic Act No. 9504 which provided exemption to minimum wage earners (Otets income tax, as well as any increase in personal exemptions.

She added that corporate income tax rate was also reduced to 30 percent from 35 percent starting this year.

Firm taps San Miguel, Blackstone Group as partners in coal projects

By Arra B. Reyes

PNOC-EXPLORATION CORP. IS INTENSIfying its coal mining operations this year, as it entered into several partnerships for its planned projects.

According to PNOC-EC chair Jaime Faria, the company has forged an agreement with food and beverage conglomerate San Miguel Corp. and Blackstone Group for the exploration and development of prospective coal areas in Zamboanga-Sibugay.

In particular, Faria said PNOC-EC, the upstream petroleum and coal arm of state-owned Philippine National Oil Co., was exploring the Landing area in the province.

PNOC-EC has also taken over the leasegrant of Little Baguio area, which was formerly operated by Taiwan Overseas Mining Co. The area, also in Zamboanga-Sibugay, is under Coal Operating Contract 41.

Faria said the company was exploring other coal areas in the Agusan area. It also has projects in Batbalo, under EDCA 122 (originated coal investment power project) and I-63.

PNOC-EC is expanding its operations this year to ensure the steady supply of coal and further improve sales performance.

On top of its Zamboanga coal operations, PNOC-EC said it would also actively pursue this year the development of project areas in Surigao, covered by COC 138, and Sta. Cruz, Zambales, under COC 132.

PNOC-EC currently serves the requirements of the cement manufacturing and power production industries with its own production from COC 43 and those from other local mine owners, including Semirara Coal Corp., and foreign suppliers.

In 2008, the company sold directly 876,000 metric tons (MT) of coal, and was able to trade 132,336 MT of Indonesian coal to China.

PNOC-EC recently assisted in mere documentation of the emerging small-scale miners market, which included small companies in the paper, textile and food processing industries.

Despite the resurgence of the new market, heavy users in the cement manufacturing industry remain sluggish.

"PNOC-EC as a holder, could not compete with the direct sales of Indonesian coal miners dumping their production into the Philippines," the company earlier said.

Security Bank, RLC planning to develop 1-ha Makati property

MEDIUM-SIZED SECURITY BANK CORP. IS working on a joint venture agreement with the Tokuingwee Robinsons Land Corp. for the development of a one-hectare property on Valero Street in Makati City into a mixed-use office and residential project.

The project includes a 24-story upscale high-rise residential development offering about 400 condominium units which may be launched in August, RLC senior vice president Ramon Urbanzo said yesterday.

The residential building is intended to be an "iconic" tower targeting the upscale market seeking residences within the country's premiere financial district, he added.

Construction is expected to be completed within five years after the launch. He said the proponents had yet to finalize the name for the project.

The project will offer residential units with sizes for larger three-room (bun room) high-rise buildings in the area.

Urbanzo said the project would also have an office space component but the residential component would be constructed first.

Under the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' rules, banks are allowed to retain non-property development resources by contributing an idle property to such a development. This is also a way of allowing the banks to unlock values from foreclosed properties.

Doris C. Dumlao

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

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It's the economy, cupid!

NUMBERS DON'T LIE, AS THEY say in business, and so nobody can deny that the economy did really well under the Arroyo administration.

Naturally the Lola at the Palace should only play the economic card in her latest speeches. Well, it is her administration's biggest achievement.

In the past eight years of the Arroyo administration, the economy posted growth in each and every quarter—ensuring, without a single negative growth rate.

Then, from only P76 billion in 2001, when the Lola assumed the presidency, the GDP now stands at about $186 billion.

Each was the most vibrant growth spurt in this country for decades. Again, it is all so, sensed. Hey, mapid, nobody can argue even just a whimper of a debate against it.

* * *

BUT AS I have been saying all these years, economic growth must start just cold numbers, unable to tell us if they actually led to gains for the ordinary people.

My personal beef was that this once-administration seemed to be glued on GDP figures to every State that the Lola delivered in the past.

But what about the guys down here in my barangay, mates, who could not eat the GDP figures that were reported in the news?

The problem in this country has always been the "distribution" of the wealth that years of economic growth have created.

It has always been lopsided in favor of a few.

* * *

IN YESTERDAY'S State, however, the Lola at the Palace tried to hammer down the issue against her administration on who actually benefited from economic growth.

On this score, I thought that the biggest factor was the influx of remittances from overseas Filipinos. Even, for one, was available, and on its price was also stable.

For instance, while the price of rice in the world market soared up last year, here the price was stable at less than 10 per kilo, based on the NFA selling price.

And that, really, despite the increase in land prices brought about by the dramatic increase in fuel prices.

Me, I will take a low inflation rate anytime over, say, mah "Mahi-mahi."

We all know that inflation—at ugly double-digit rates, for instance, in the 1980s and most of the 1990s—ruined the lives of even those in the middle-income brackets.

Really, why should we kill ourselves searching where high inflation rate would only eat up our savings?

Sure, it is unreachable, but somehow low inflation rate does something 'wonderful' to public morale.

* * *

SO WHAT brought about that lowest inflation rate in the past five decades?

Based on the State, this administration worked for a stable foreign exchange rate, and at same time, the prices of goods and services were kept at reasonable levels.

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Credit upgrade . . .

From page B1

week. It raised the rating for Philippine foreign and local currency borrowings to a notch, with a stable outlook.

Moody's said the upgrade was "prompted by the relatively high degree of resiliency exhibited by both the country's financial system and external payments position in the face of a global ... crisis."

The rating is still speculative, or below investment grade.

Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves said the upgrade "becomes more significant as it was done at a time when the world economy is experiencing probably its worst financial crisis in history."

BSP: RP may get . . .

From page B1

ments will come in emerging economies," the monetary official said.

He added that investors would likely place their money in emerging markets like the Philippines, where interest rates are higher and economies are relatively strong.

The Philippine economy, as measured in terms of gross domestic product, grew by 0.4 percent in the first quarter of the year.

This may have been the slowest pace in 10 years, but the country's economy is remarkable, while others, more advanced economies, are still in the grip of a recession, economic managers said.

For the entire year, the government expects the Philippines to grow between 0.8 and 1.8 percent.

Although the world economy is still in a crisis, there has been a gradual improvement toward the end of the quarter, benefiting some emerging economies in terms of increase in foreign portfolio investments. The Philippines, for instance, registered a net inflow of $190.22 million in "hot money" in the first half of the year, reversing the net outflow of $636.27 million seen in the same period last year.

Sugar prices seen rising due to high demand

Veco gets ERC nod to initiate power program

By Amy R. Remo

THE ENERGY REGULATORY Commission has authorized the Visayan Electric Co. (Veco) to implement its de-loading program to help ease the critical power supply situation in the Visayas.

Under the program, Veco's customers will enter in an interruptible load agreement with the utility. These customers will be "de-loaded" at times when there is a shortfall in power supply, the ERC said in a statement.

Participating customers are those that have the ability to generate their own power if they were to temporarily cut off their power supply.

In turn, these participating customers will be compensated for their, by generating their own power, they may incur higher costs for running their standby generating sets or plants than when their power is supplied by Veco.

The ERC said compensation would be shouldered by all other customers of Veco who benefited from the voluntary de-loading because their non-participating customers would no longer experience brownouts.

"The ERC is optimistic that the successful implementation of the de-loading program, initially in the Veco franchise area and perhaps later in other parts of the Visayas, with the cooperation of all stakeholders, will help ease the supply shortage in the Visayas and ensure brownout free months ahead," said ERC Chair Jurisito G. Cruz-Bacal.

Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes earlier warned of a possible one- to three-hour rotating brownouts on a daily basis beginning 2010, unless additional capacities come in by next year.

By Rica T. Dichoso

HIGH DEMAND FOR SUGAR COMBINED with low production could erode existing supply to the crop year comes to a close. This, even as prices of the sweetener remained stable, sectoral sources said.

According to the Philippine Sugar Millers Association Inc. (PSMAI), refined stocks of raw and refined sugar stocks from mills have increased by 12 percent and 7 percent, respectively, since last year.

Withdrawals of raw sugar grew to 1.9 million metric tons (MT) as of July 2009 from 1.7 million MT in the same month last year.

Withdrawals of refined or white sugar also grew to 902,000 MT from 600,000 MT.

PSMAI president Archimedes Montes said the indicated robust domestic demand for sugar.

"But prices have remained stable so far," Montes noted.

While demand is up, data from the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) showed that this year on, post production might drop to 2.1 million MT from 2.45 million MT in the previous year. The decline is blamed on inclement rains and reduced fertilizer use caused by rising fertilizer prices.

"Production is 10 percent lower than last year and increased demand could result in improved prices around September, when new planting has started," SRA administrator Rafael L. Coscolluela said.

"We are almost at the tailend of our production period and we don't see significant changes in this estimate at this point," Coscolluela said.

He said that rainy weather and high fuel and fertilizer prices affected production.

Panay suffered the worst decline with production 32 percent down to 99,250 MT from 145,866 MT last year.

The production drop in Panay was blamed on the crop damage caused by Typhoon "Frank" in June 2008.

The best performing region this year was Negros Occidental, posting a drop of only 13 percent to 1.16 million MT from 1.34 million MT last year.

Also this year, the Philippines expects to export 85,000 MT in the world market, Coscolluela said. About 10 percent of production is considered export grade.

"So far, we have exported 78,915 MT as the end of the crop year we would have exported above 85,000 MT," he said.

The Philippines also vowed an export quota of 137,000 MT to the United States.

The industry had earlier projected 2.3 million MT of output, higher than last year's 2.45 million mark, a 23-year high. However, authorities revised the estimate as they noted persistently rainy weather and lessened fertilizer use among farmers still reeling from fertilizer price hikes in late 2008.

Stocks rise as bomb scare rattles bourse

Front page A2-1

Philippine Stock Exchange personnel after receiving a bomb threat, the head of the exchange said.

Francis Lim, PSE president, said police and the bomb squad made a sweep of the building in Manila's Ortigas business district but did not find any explosives.

"As a precaution, especially after the Jakarta bombings, we sent home our people at around 1:30 p.m.," Lim said. "The latest report I got is, everything is clear."

"There will be trading tomorrow," he said.

Jose Mari Luzuriaga, head of research at stock brokerage Campos, Lanuza & Co., said that, on occasions of threat of the Nation Saloman, the stock market would usually be lifted. However, he said, yesterday's rally could be largely due to Meralco's earlier rise, as well as optimism from an unexpected sovereign credit rating upgrade by Moody's Investor Service.

Moody's, said to be the most pessimistic among the three major global credit watchers, upgraded by a notch to rating on Philippine government debt last week.

Asiro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings said local investor sentiment was buoyed by the upbeat sentiment in the region. "There's rising optimism not just on the regional macroeconomy but also on the corporates," Del Castillo said.

He added that Meralco's winning streak also contributed to the stock market's advance.

Meralco announced for about 4 percent of the P15.9 billion value turnover at the stock market, which had 78 advances against 44 declines while 53 stocks were unchanged.

Other stocks that gained on heavy volume yesterday were Energy Development Corp., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Banco de Oro Unibank, Megaworld Corp., Ayala Corp. and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. With a report from Reuters

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As market has no beginning nor ending

LIKE I'VE SAID LAST TIME, THE market is already technically long "overbought." It's a condition where stock prices have gone up relatively higher to a level most investors perceive to be selling than to be holding on to their stock holdings. But the sell down that may force prices to go down further until they will create room in the opposite extreme, called "oversold," is not yet there.

Thus many investment driven investors in the stock bulls that bears in the market at present. But they could be more cautious at this time, given the fact that the cycle will inevitably happen like the increase action of stocks to-

MARKET RIDER

Ben Sorreta

the sundown without any beginning or ending, into endless hills and fury.

End of Week Seven

While the top share data where we changed, longtimer made a big jump from another fourth place to the end of week 7 mainly on account of the stock-

ops in shares with the top gainers...data of increasing more capital in an advancing market—as compared to retaining gains as much like Trader 28.

Trader28 had the least growth for the week. She realized a mere 0.16 percentage point gain despite the 64.47 points or 2.41 percent advance posted by the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) when it closed on Friday at 2,670.47; this is not to mention the week-on-week advance of the PSEi of 4.88 percent.

Nobody was able to beat the market's advance for the week. Trait Mr. who had the biggest gain, but only 3.07 percent, followed by The Oracle with 2.38 percent, the longtimer, 2.16 percent and Cyclebreaker, 1.86 percent.

QB Intake and Cyclebreaker were the only two virtual market riders with additional trades announced for week 7. QB trader sold her 6,000 shares of Robinson's Land Corp. (RLC) at P7.50 per share because as she said, "[RLC] seems to have reached its peak price." That was on Thursday, July 23.

With no method to guide her exit strategy, she missed the circle of RLC the following day when it hit a high of P8.48 or the close of P8.28, an additional 10.8 12.8 percent profit from her selling price.

Cyclebreaker did the same on Thursday and Friday. She sold her holdings on Belle Corp. (BEL), APC Group Inc. (APC), and Megaworld Corp. (MEG), saying, "They were already overbought."

However, like those stocks I said before that might hack the trend despite being "overbought," MEG closed higher on Friday at P1.16, 7 percent higher than her P1.08 selling price.

In turn, the Seraphic Pisces Inc. (PSI), in her words, "Pisa is attempting to break the P2.85 neckline (the middle tip of the inverted letter "M" formation of the reversed head-and-shoulder chart). Target is P3.20."

Bottom line spin

If you want to know when the critical sell down will happen, don't believe anybody who would say he or she knows but none's tell you. The best way to contend with the challenge is to choose stocks that may just have the ability to buck the trend...a characteristic found in stocks with credible fundamental storyline and uptrend market following. A knowledge basically obtained by lesson to goodness policy-type of investigation work.

You may reach the Market Rider at marketrider@inquirer.com.ph or directly at denicomeri@yahoo.com

Portfolio Summary and Overall Performance Standings For Week Seven: July 20 - 24, 2009

1st Place: Trait Mr. (Has to remain within bounds and impediment profile)

Stocks	Shares	% Portfolio	Amount Invested	Current Value	Gain	Loss
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

BUSINESS

Shift away from short-term debts continues

Liability management strategy

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE COUNTRY IMPROVED THE maturity profile of its foreign currency-denominated debts in the first quarter, as obligations with short-term maturities declined as opportunistic bond liabilities.

Data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that the country's external debts with short-term maturities—at $6.3 billion as of mid-March—represented only 12.4 percent of the total obligations denominated in foreign currencies during the period. This was down from the 15 percent posted in mid-December 2008.

Short-term debts mature in one year or less and are usually incurred from short-term obligations.

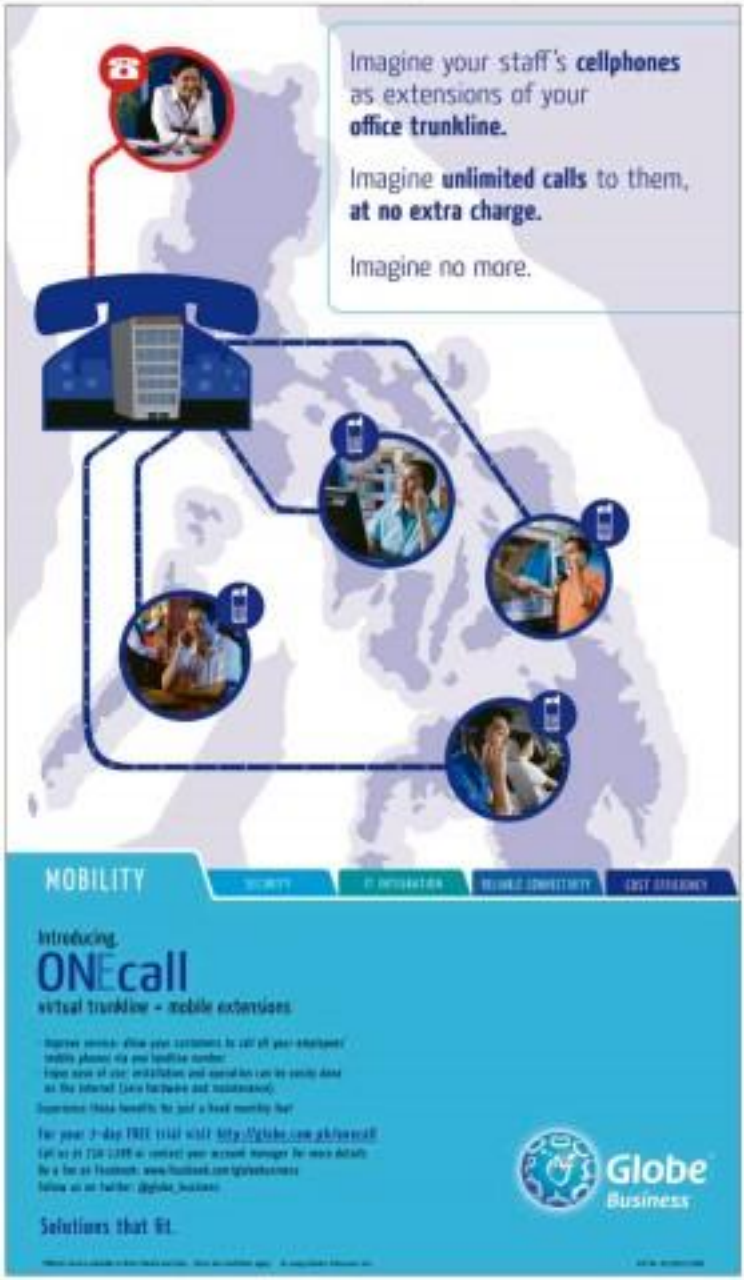
Long-term debts, on the other hand, are those that mature in more than one year.

The country's external debts as of the first quarter were 2.5 percent lower than the $66.06 billion as of mid-December last year. Officials said the amount of loans paid were higher than the amount of fresh loans obtained by the first quarter, resulting in a drop in outstanding foreign debts.

Nearly 75 percent of the country's external obligations in the first quarter represented debts incurred by the government. The private sector's share was only 25 percent.

Monetary officials said the manageability of the country's external obligations was a result of liability management strategies implemented both by government entities and private-sector borrowers. The government, for instance, sold dollar bonds with medium- to long-term maturities in the international capital market.

Repayment of external loans has also proven advantageous as debt-management strategies adopted by many corporate and government entities as a liability management strategy.



Robinsons Land launches Pasig project

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ROBINSONS-ROBINSONS LAND CORP. (RLC) yesterday launched an upscale mid-rise condominium development in Pasig, targeting young families seeking an exclusive residential enclave near the Ortigas central business district.

RLC's new project development, Vimeira Verde Residences, occupies a 5,259-square-meter property along Sr. Martin St. near Valle Verde 1. It will have three seven-story residential buildings with 80 condominium units to be sold for P9.3 million (73-square-meter two-bedroom unit, including parking) to P11 million (three-bedroom two-story penthouse units).

The project site is just a stone's throw from Manila's up-scale park as La Salle Green Hills, Poveda, St. Paul's Pasig and Ateneo. It also has easy access to the Ortigas central business district.

The project also offers cost savings to home buyers, because the units will have fast-fit cuts and can therefore be customized according to the owners' style and preferences.

The best-fitted suit is a key innovation that allows buyers to save about P 85,000 per square metre on fit-outs that they will likely tear down anyway, RLC president Frederic Gerard.

Based on recent studies by RLC, about 70-80 percent of buyers of finished condominium units prefer to bring along their personal interior decorators, as they just tear down most of what is on along the unit when they are delivered. Actually, RLC is encouraging only the basic utilities to be able to price the units at 30-percent lower than completely finished unit.

The target market includes people in their late 20s to 40s with a combined monthly household income of P150,000 to P300,000 or those in the all-income segment, who can afford a monthly amortization of P50,000 to P100,000. A minimum down payment of 20 percent is required but this can be amortized for two years. Long-term financing can be tapped for the remaining 80-percent payment.

'09 BPO space supply seen lower than target

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE THE BUSINESS PROCESS OUTsourcing sector continues to expect growth amid the economic downturn, the office space supply expected to be delivered this year is expected to be limited to only half of the originally planned supply this year.

According to Claro Gealone Jr., head of research and valuation for Jones Lang LaSalle Leechin, the earlier projection of an additional 200,000 square meters (sq. m.) of office space for 2009 had been trimmed by half to only 100,000 sq.m.

"The real estate side of the BPO sector is still quite good, although the number of office developments to be completed this year has been scaled down," he said in an interview. "There was still an estate taken up first-trade (in) pre-leasing."

Most of the demand would still be for office space in prime locations such as Makati and Ortigas, he said, but since these locations were now already saturated, demand for space in second-tier locations was also expected to increase.

"Companies are now going to decentralized areas and nearby provinces such as Cavite. They're also looking at Baguio, Cebu and Davao," he said.

As for the trend in types of office spaces being offered, he said most developers were focused on build-to-suit leases that were flexible enough to cater to the various space requirements of different companies.

Right now, lease rates were still highest in prime locations in Makati at P650-P750 per square meter, he said. Other locations in Makati as well as in the newly developed Global City offered slightly lower rates at P600-P700.

Outside Makati and the Global City periphery in the Ortigas area, he said potential BPO tenants could expect to pay P500-P600 per square meter a month. Office rates usually offered lower rates of P400-P500 per square meter.

The Commission on Information and Communications Technology, Business Processing Association of the Philippines and the Department of Trade and Industry are promoting seven outside Metro Manila and Metro Cebu as potential sites for BPO operations.

The 10 best sites outside Metro Manila and Metro Cebu, dubbed the Top 10 Next Wave Cities, are Metro Laguna, Subic-Clark, Bacolod City, Iloilo City, Puerto Princesa City, Metro Pampanga, Iligan and Metro Batangas, Cagayan de Oro City and Lipa City.

LIFESTYLE Wellness

Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

How Pilates saves Ed Calma's day

Leading architect, desk-bound the whole day, was prone to back pains

By Margo C. Enriquez
Contributor

LIKE MOST DESK-BOUND professionals, award-winning architect Eduardo Calma was prone to back pains. "I'd be sitting down, hunched in front of the computer while drawing for hours. I wasn't using my stomach muscles," he recalls.

Peeved by side trainers, he took up Pilates, which, aside from providing total body conditioning, is also a method for managing pain and providing rehabilitation. Three years ago, he started working out at the Integrated Body Arts Studio, under elite instructor Cecille Barrogo-Buenida.

HOW THEY STAY FIT

At 44 and with no more back and shoulder pains, he's more fit than when years his age. Younger classmates in yoga are impressed with his agility.

There are many kinds of Pilates in the country today. Buenida and her associates Jackie Sicam, Chabi Espinas and Blanche Miranda follow the True Pilates, imparted by Romana Kryzanowska, a disciple of founder Joseph Pilates.

The basic precept of True Pilates is "centerings," or using the mind to control the muscles. The exercises focus on the correct usage of core postural muscles that maintain body balance and hold up the spine. Pilates emphasizes coordinated breathing, spinal alignment and the strengthening of the core or the powerhouse—the inner muscles of the torso, abdomen and pelvis. Aside from building muscle strength and stamina, the ultimate goal is to move effectively and gracefully, and engage in grinding work and strenuous activities without unnecessary physical fatigue or mental tiredness.

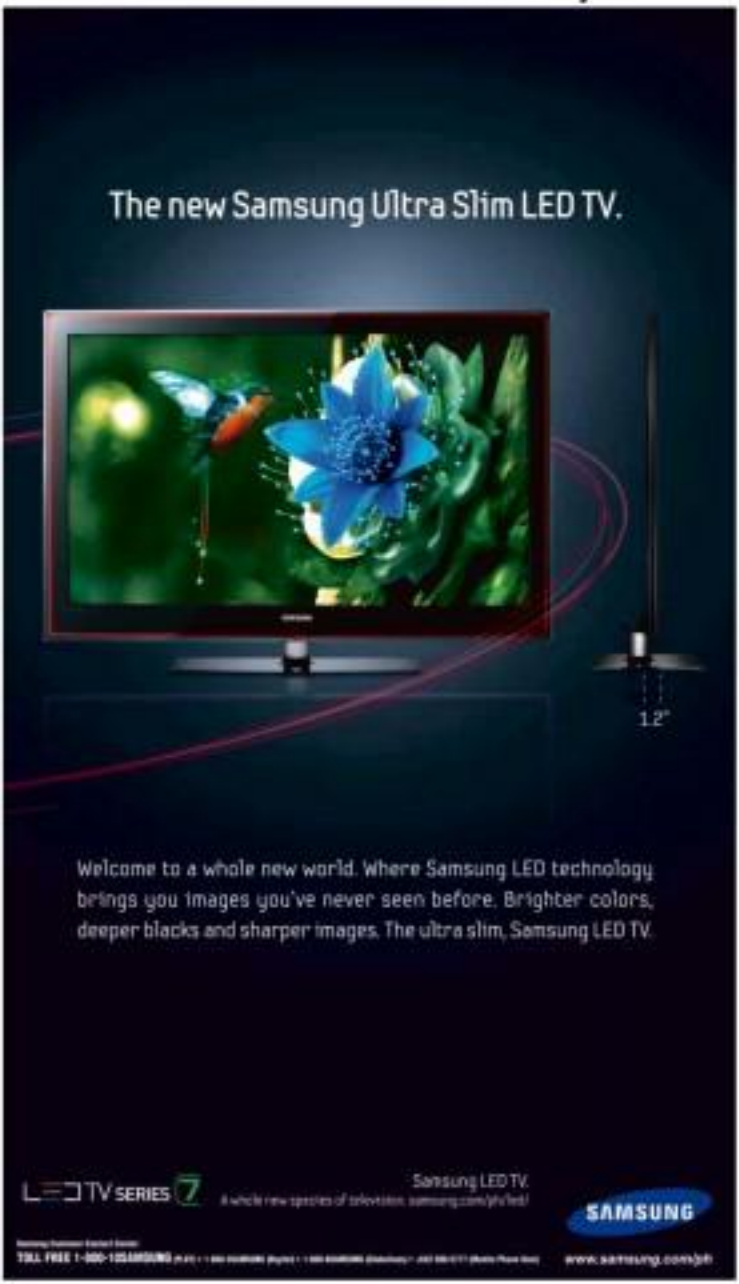
50-minute workout

Initially, Calma thought Pilates was easy to his workout, he would just do exercises lying down on a comfortable, leather upholstered carriage controlled by removable springs and pulling straps. Now, after each class, he gets totally sweaty.

"In 50 minutes, I get an intense, all-around workout. I get to develop every part of my body equally. I get exhausted after one session, but I feel it's worth it for the amount of time, as opposed to just running for two hours. In Pilates, you must sustain the movements, and that requires control," he says.

Hours, Calma's relentless instructor,

HOW PILATES C>



GARFIELD

A. LIPIN

PUGAD BABOY

DICK TRACY

LOVEWAGES

JUMPSUIT

DIVINE COMEDY

SHORT BURSTS

TULDOK

BEN

KYOSO AND MOSSY

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DANE

YOU BORN TODAY You have an amazing optimism and confidence in yourself, which drives you to be the best you can be. You have high standards for yourself, and you generally meet them because you're a hard worker. You also know how to share effort, which makes you a popular friend and colleague. Your charm is full of sparkling, easy conversation. Gemini and Libra

Birthdate of Lin Yutang (1895), author; Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, former US first lady; Terry Fox, humanitarian/athlete.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Jane Austen heroine
5 Fuel for a fireplace
10 Hide-and-seek player
14 Ballpark figure
15 Computer operators
16 Sign before Virgo
17 Sign before Libra
18 Sign before Scorpio
19 Sign before Sagittarius
20 Capricorn's sign
23 Sign before Aquarius
24 Sign before Pisces
25 Aries' sign
28 Taurus' sign
29 Gemini's sign
30 Cancer's sign
31 Leo's sign
32 Virgo's sign
33 Libra's sign
34 Scorpio's sign
35 Sagittarius' sign
36 Capricorn's sign
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40 Taurus' sign
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88 Taurus' sign
89 Gemini's sign
90 Cancer's sign
91 Leo's sign
92 Virgo's sign
93 Libra's sign
94 Scorpio's sign
95 Sagittarius' sign
96 Capricorn's sign
97 Aquarius' sign
98 Pisces' sign
99 Aries' sign
100 Taurus' sign

DOWN

1 Tiny bite
2 Fuel for a fireplace
3 Hide-and-seek player
4 Ballpark figure
5 Computer operators
6 Sign before Virgo
7 Sign before Libra
8 Sign before Scorpio
9 Sign before Sagittarius
10 Capricorn's sign
11 Sign before Aquarius
12 Sign before Pisces
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14 Taurus' sign
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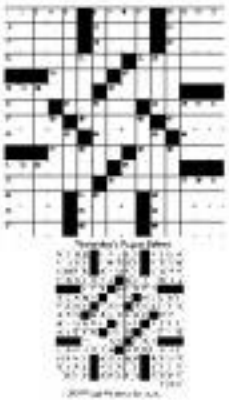
100 Cancer's sign



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

1				2			6	
			8		9	2		3
		4			5		1	
	1				4	8	9	7
4	2	7	6				3	
	8		5			6		
3		5	4		1			
	4		9					1

EMBARO Level ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and program at www.SuDoKu.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	4	7	1	3	9	2	5	8
5	2	9	4	8	6	1	3	7
8	3	1	7	5	2	4	6	9
1	6	2	8	4	7	5	9	3
9	8	5	3	6	1	7	4	2
3	7	4	2	9	5	6	8	1
2	1	6	9	7	4	3	8	5
4	9	8	5	2	3	6	7	1
7	5	3	6	1	8	9	2	4

How Pilates saves Ed Calma's day

Front page C1

explains, "Ed arrived with a weak back so we didn't push him. Now that he understands how to use his powerhouse, we've been giving him more challenges. He was naturally flexible, but he lacked control. That's why he injured his back."

Now at an advanced level, Calma's workout consists of 24 sets of moves, each with variations that focus on certain muscle groups. According to Pilates, a workout is more effective when the mind is given a whole century of exercise class each lesson repetitious. Too many repetitions can be boring. When exercises are performed mindlessly, results cannot be produced.

In Pilates, full concentration is required, as the instructor feels keep shifting throughout the session.

The workout focuses on the powerhouse—the muscles which stabilize the back and neck, provide proper posture and tone up the joints to facilitate the natural suppleness of the limbs. This type of strength and fitness acquired in Pilates can translate well into everyday activities.

THE ROLLER Isaac: Putting the body in a "C" shape to strengthen stomach muscles in order to support the back

Elsewhere, Mon my body has changed. The middle got defined on the sides, which never happened before," says Calma, referring to the oblique muscles. "When I'm sitting down at work, I'm more conscious of my posture and I'm pulling up my stomach." By applying the proper postures at work, Calma says, even the shoulder pains are gone.

Susan explains, "You get back problems when your stomach is just hanging out and you end up using your back too much. This puts a strain [on your back muscles]. As in marriage, the abdominal muscles and the back are partners. Pilates teaches you how to be more aware of your body and how to correct your posture."

Calma adds that when he did traditional weight training in the gym, he got bulkier. Pilates provides moderate strength training but the intense resistance and lengthening of the muscles helped him burn calories and toned his body.

Pilates has also increased his movement range. He never thought he could do inversion postures and suspend his knees body in the air. Now he is even working on leg splits.

"When my friends complains of back pains, I recommend Pilates because it's helped me," says Calma.

KNEEING backwards to stretch the thighs and back

Kai Tels at Berkeley Regency is pampering heavens.

Honeymoon pampering—and more—by the beach

By Irene C. Perez

BORACAY GETAWAYS doesn't have to be glam and sordid. The usual party crowd may not be there, but there's no such thing as off-peak season in beach resorts.

Kai Regency Spa is a luxurious destination spa in Boracay. Regency Beach Resort (+6336) 288-3333, ext. 2181).

Kai Spa is a P16-million project on the third and fourth levels of the newly opened Garden Wing. It has Oriental touches, calming ambiance and soothing mood.

Massage, anyone?

VIP massages are done in the beachfront honeymoon cottages with a shower room.

Kai Signature Massage promotes blood circulation and relaxes the body; participants get an eyeful using traditional foot-feet massage strokes in Four Hand Harmony Massage.

The Aroma Hot Stone Massage uses black basalt volcanic stones placed on "energy points" to ease tense muscles.

For something homegrown, there's the Filipino Hagod, a variation of the Ishiyi using natural oils.

Massages done in the Royal Sweetheart Suites include the Kai Royal Thai Massage with lots of stretching to relieve stiff joints...a favorite among water-sports enthusiasts; and Oriental Shiatsu, which utilizes finger pressure to alleviate headaches and insomnia.

The Hawaiian Lomi-Lomi, Aromalymphotherapy and Well-being Swedish massage are all available in the Express Couple Cottages.

Honeymoon treats

Kai Spa's Romantic Ritual for honeymooners include the use of thermarium, welcome drinks, fruit selection, warm foot bath with sea salt and flowers, a gift, and a pet refund given as encouragement.

The 24-hour Romantic Paradise package includes Candlelight Rose Petal Milk Bath, Aroma Stone Massage, Choco Lovers Soulful Massage and Purifying Facial, all for Pxxx.

Other options are Utopia, Heaven of Wellness, Love Two Spa and Tender Romance combinations.

Those who need skin satisfaction after long days spent under the sun would love the scrubs and wrap treatments.

Facials

Kai also offers Diamond Peel Treatment which includes a deep-cleansing, Purifying facial—best for oily skin.

For specific needs, the Green Tea Soothing Facial is for sensitive/acne-prone/dry to dehydrated skin; and Whitening Vitamin C Facial that evens out skin tone.

For guys, there's the Gentleman's Facial to help prevent ingrown hair due to shaving.

Hand and foot spas are also offered at the Dynasty Hall.

After sweat out at chair Henry Chuasuy's sauna in 1998 of a 40-room deluxe resort has grown into a 281-room beachfront haven. Regency resort has two large pools (one has a bar). VIP lounge, business center and well-equipped gym.

Celebrities make a home run

By Anne A. Jardines

WHEN IT'S FOR A GOOD CAUSE, EVERYONE participates.

Thousands of runners showed up for "Run for Home: Globe-Ayala Land City Run for Habitat for Humanity" in Bonifacio High Street at The Fort, Taguig, Edsa. The fun-run morning event sponsored by the telecom giant was attended by more than 6,400 runners.

Participants included Ayala Corp. president and COO Fernando Zobel de Ayala, who finished the 21-km race in 1:48, Ayala Land president Antonino Aquino, Sen. Pia Cayetano, Habitat for Humanity chair Francisco del Rosario Jr., Dominic Jacob, Senior Huang, Isaiboo Lim, Marisol Lim, Anthony Pangilinan, Erwin Villaceran, Inez Sandejas, Celeste Reyes, Raven Davila, Gilbert Reinoldo, Tricia Chiongbian, Loraina Ferreiro and Bea Fuentes.

"When people show up for a good cause it's overwhelming enough. The fact that more than 6,000 registered is really overwhelming. When it's a good cause everyone cooperates, including the weather," said Alec Erlanger, [illegible] and ambassador of Habitat for Humanity.

"Run for Home," with the Habitat for Humanity Philippines, will help raise funds for the Rapid Build Pilot in Brgy. Pinag-Ibayo [illegible] whose key project is the 100-hectare resettlement housing construction in Barangay Dayap Cabuyao, Laguna called Bayanihan in Cabuyao. This will be the main resettlement area for families that live along the Pasig River.

"At Globe we feel a great sense of responsibility in the community we live in, and we are glad to be given a chance to make a difference in people's lives," said Globe president and CEO Ernest Cu.

[illegible] and Habitat for Humanity will repair 800 existing housing units and construct new ones to accommodate the increasing demand.

"Bayanihan will not only relocate residents to the Pasig River area but will also help clean up the river when full resettlement is accomplished. I've seen areas of hope. If people do the same all over the country we could all together do something for our country," the young Erlanger said.

THE RACE is now help the resettlement of Pasig River residents. PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO

EVEN toddlers joined the run for a good cause.

Tracking technology

"Run for Home" also used state-of-the-art tracking technology. Disposable electronic timing chips marked running time of participants, including results in age division and gender and overall ranking, number of runners each participant carried and the number that cannot finish and other fun info. Each disposable chip is tagged on a specific runner so tracking is smooth, unless it is improperly installed.

Participants were able to review their performance through the Globe website, where they were also able to access and download, free of charge, their photos during the run by simply logging in their bib number.

"Today we were able to bring together Globe's technological experience and the Ayala Group's collective dedication to community development to bring extraordinary experiences to runners from all over. But just it—it was all for a very worthy cause," said Bonifacio Gau, Globe consumer sales and after sales head.

Winners received cash prizes of up to P15,000. Visit www.globe.com.ph/run-habitat to check out results and the behind-the-[illegible].

AYALA Corp. president and COO Fernando Zobel de Ayala finished the 21-km event in 1:48.

SOME runners brought along their four-legged friends.

Proper breathing is key to healthy living

By Sujata S. Mahi
Contributor

WHEN VIRIAM RADHA decided to leave his lucrative job in India to become a teacher for the Art of Living courses, his parents were perplexed. It didn't help any when he told them he wanted to go around the world teaching people how to breathe.

"But what can be more important than breathing?" Radha, who is also a Mumbai-based concert artist and musician, asked around 20 participants at the recent Art of Living class held in Makati.

"You can live without food for a couple of weeks; you can live without water for a few days. But take away the breath for a few minutes? You're gone!"

Proper breathing has been proven to relieve physical disorders, relax the body and calm the mind. Meditation acknowledge it as the key to spiritual awakening.

"Observe your breath when you are upset," Hazen instructs. "And see how different it is when you are happy. Or don't. Manage your breath, and you manage your life."

Workshop

The full-day of the workshop is the Sudarshan Kriya, a rhythmic breathing technique that energizes, detoxifies, and clears the mind of tension and fatigue. In between the breathing processes are group conversations, yoga and self-exploration.

The participants were also treated to a concert of Hazen and Cynthia Alexander, who is also an Art of Living teacher.

The next Art of Living course will be held Aug. 24-29 at Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. Call 2166130, 0917-8684898 or 0917-5229496, e-mail is-fo@artofliving.org.ph; visit www.artofliving.org.ph.

Vikram Hazen and Cynthia Alexander

How mind power can make one ill

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

WHEN IT COMES TO DETERmining the causes of illness, medical doctors generally pay little or no importance at all to the role the patient's mind plays.

During the late 1400s, it was pointed by medical science that all diseases are caused by some disease-causing agent or organism known as pathogens, such as microbes, bacteria or viruses. All that the doctor needs to do is to find the pathogen, kill them with antibiotics or remove them through surgery, and the patient gets well.

This simplistic view of the causes of a person's illness did not sit well with Aaron Hungerian physician named Dr. Hans Selye. So he took a leave of absence from his medical practice to embark on a pioneering research which forever changed the way medical science regarded the causes of illness.

Studying at first the behavior of animals, Selye discovered what has since become known as the "fight-or-flight" syndrome, which was the animal's survival mechanism. If the fight-or-flight syndrome is suppressed, or not allowed to take its natural course, it led to disease.

The suppression of the fight-or-flight syndrome is what gives rise to stress, stress, he found, can lead to organic ailments. What are some of these diseases which Selye and later researchers discovered to be caused by stress? Headaches and migraines, gastritis and hyperacidity, ulcers, insomnia, asthma, premenstrual syndrome in women, certain types of heart ailments and even some types of cancer.

Greek, Egyptian healers

That our mind can make us ill is nothing new. The early Greek and Egyptian healers before the time of Christ knew that all along. What they did not know was the mechanism by which the mind affects the body. It was only in the mid-20th century with the advance of neuroscience and the development of modern sensitive instruments that science began to realize the intimate connections among the mind, body and emotions.

A disconcerted climate counselor of how the mind affects the body is illustrated by the following case as related by Emily Cone, a French pharmacist and healer who was a pioneer in what has become known as cognitology, that is, that the mind can create actual physical changes by suggestion or affirmation.

A man who suffered from asthmatic attacks went to another town and checked in a hotel he was not familiar with. One evening, while in bed, he felt the onset of impending asthmatic attack. Usually all he had to do when having an attack was to open the window, breathe some fresh air and his asthmatic attack would go away.

But he was in a dark room in an unfamiliar place. He was gasping desperate because he could not find the asthmatic attack getting severe. Not wanting time to open the unfamiliar window, he got hold of a chair and hurled it against the glass which broke into pieces. Then he put his head out and breathed in what he thought was fresh air and his asthmatic attack was soon gone. Then he went back to sleep.

Next morning, he looked at what he had broken and discovered it was an old grandfather's clock. His hotel room did not have any window.

There are many documented examples of the tremendous influence of our mind and emotions over our physical body. And therefore medical doctors can no longer ignore the role that the patient mind plays in what causes illness. Giving him a drug or pill may work for most people but may not work at all for some, unless how he thinks it takes into consideration. The mind can certainly cause illness, but it can also effect a cure.

For inquiries on books, personal services, seminars on Inner Mind Development, ESP & Intuition Development, and Seminars, Retreats & Reincarnation conducted by this writer, call 8307265, fax 833-6980 or e-mail Jaimelicauco@yahoo.com.

Why mother's milk is best for babies

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

ACCORDING TO scientific studies, colostrum consists of 58 percent T-cells like the immune soldiers of the immune system) where "transfer factor" is found.

Transfer factors are the information molecules also known as memory molecules.

They allow the immune system to recognize, respond and remember all foreign invaders of the body like viruses, bacteria, fungi and cancer cells.

This explains why mother's milk is the best for babies.

You don't have to be like Ring Lardizabal who, with 500 wives and 700 concubines, had a full supply of colostrum.

The UK company inspired by the research of biomolecular Dr. R. Sherwood Lawrence of New York University, with 4-18% has developed an extraction machine that can encapsulate it under factory through an ultra-fil. traction machine, using milk from organically fed cows and chicken egg yolks.

One capsule can literally increase the T-cells and revitalize the immune system by 400 percent.

Take the case of Babes, 62, who had stage-four prostate cancer with metastasis in the lungs. He took three Transfer Factor capsules thrice a day. After 21 days of staying in a hospital, he checked out.

His MRI taken by the Harvard Kidney Institute showed he was cancer-free after three months. That was four years ago.

Today, he is healthy and enjoys fishing.

A 22-year old seventeen Filipino teacher was declared unfit to work due to Hepatitis B infectious type. He could not afford the treatment treatment valued at P1 million/year.

So he took six capsules of transfer factor daily for 3 weeks. After this regimen, he went back to work.

For other success stories on colon, stomach and brain cancer, lupus, stroke, heart disease, psoriasis, viral sexual infertility, Mongpoo sent. Call (02) 6946928, 0917-8946928, 6946928, or World of Wellness at 7223878.

Health program

The easiest way to begin a healthy program is to pay your doctor a visit, have an executive checkup and change your lifestyle.

Simple rules to remember:

- Increase intake of vegetables and fruit (raw is better than cooked).
- Exercise.
- Increase water intake.
- Have proper elimination daily. Increase fiber intake.
- Sleep at least six or eight hours a day.
- Take a multivitamin/mineral supplement.
- Take 500-2,000 mg of vitamin C daily.
- Manage your stress via mind body exercises.
- Take it easy.
- Give love to all.

Affirm: "I am well."

Love and light!

E-mail the author at coryquirino@hotmail.com

Where to get perfect wedding ideas

By Kristine Mangaoang

"AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY ever after."

Couples who finally decide to exchange vows would like to hear the same line when their own story is told. Major preparations for the ceremonies and beyond are therefore a must.

"Choose as much as possible, the best caterer in town, pick out the most beautiful dress, look for the best place to live in." All these is da'bomb-like time.

At Trillanes's "Knots to Knots," (tel. 904-5000, www.knotsexperience.com), an event on the ground floor (near SM Cubao) which runs until July 30, couples can choose from a variety of wedding themes and ideas.

With the exhibit, wedding preparations can be made much simpler and easier.

Designers

"Knots to Knots" features the country's renowned wedding gown designers: Francis Libiran's under the rain-themed wedding gown said made any bride feel like the mermaid in Disney's classic movie.

The fusion of Filipino and Moroccan styles in Pepsi Herrera's wedding gowns takes the viewer on a trip to the beautiful and exotic land away from home.

The creations of Edwin Tan, Ferdi Aboud, Jun Escario and Eric de los Santos are also on display.

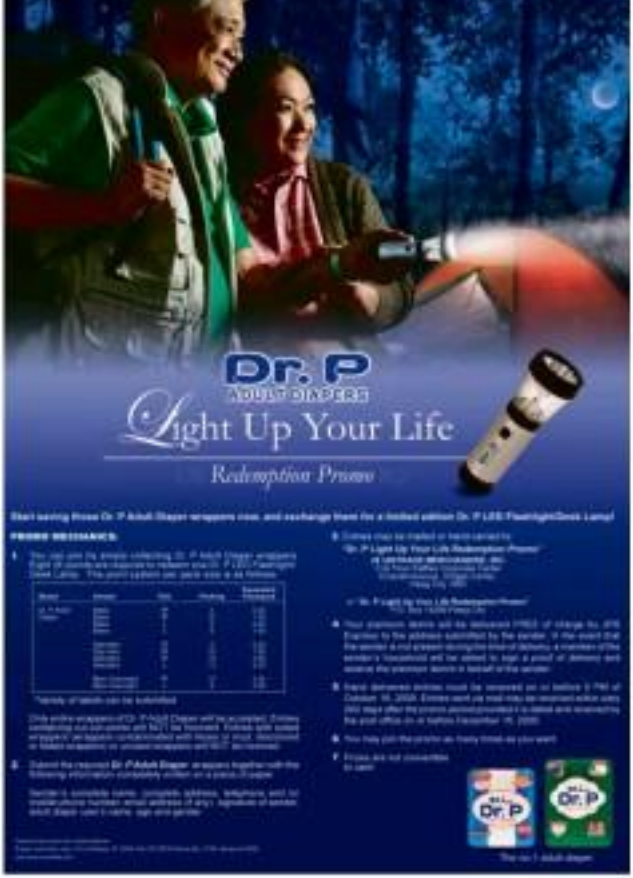
But that's not all. "Knots to Knots" adds a touch of after the wedding scenarios by showcasing engraved home indoor arrangements by the country's acclaimed event stylist, Henry Penrose.

The under-the-sea theme reflected in Libiran's gown is made complete by a complementing home style that creates that "below sea-water" illusion.

Herrera's gown, on the other hand, is displayed alongside a Filipino-Moroccan home arrangement that goes well with the gown's exotic elements.

Indeed, with "Knots to Knots," that much sought after "and they lived happily ever after" might be the last line written in every couple's own storybook after all.

GOWN by Ferdi Aboud



TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2009 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

ENTERTAINMENT

INSIDE
Boyz II Men back on the pop radar Review /D4
Valerie Concepcion not ready for second love Dollywood /D6

Mang Truman's show

Veteran comic takes centerstage in a drama film

LOU Veloso in a scene from "Colorum"

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

AFTER 35 YEARS IN SHOW BIZ, ACTOR Lou Veloso finally lands a major drama role in "Colorum," en route to this year's Cinemalaya film festival.

Playing the lead in stage plays ("Mga Unsiyo sa Powell Street") and short films ("Soo-Goo at Waterlily") is no consolation, but a drama role in a full-length movie comes near to a blue moon to Veloso.

"People know me as a comedian because of the Mang Truman character I played on the sitcom 'OK Fabulous, Fellas and Others' in 2003," he recalls.

Alter ego

Created by director Jose Javier Reyes, Truman became Veloso's alter ego. "It stuck and I got typecast in comic roles. I used to say that I was a frustrated drama actor."

Until "Colorum" came along.

Veloso auditioned for the role of Pedro, an ex-convict who reluctantly goes on a road trip with rookie cop Simon (Mhyd Vergel).

Director Jun Stellan Ballesteros asked Veloso to read the "adaptasyon" scene. Pedro's conversation with his estranged son. "I ended up sobbing," he said.

When he learned that he won the part, he was initially hesitant to accept the pro-

(MORE TRUMAN ON C2)

Erik Santos' new CD enters OPM chart

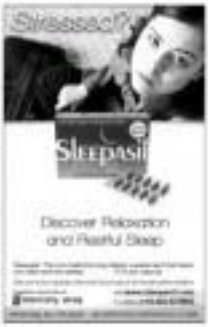
odyssey MUSIC & VIDEO

THE TOP-SELLING ALBUMS in the Philippines for the week July 22-28, based on Odyssey Music & Video store chain's sales reports:

OPM

1) "Ikaw Na Nga," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 2) "Galing Galing," Willie Revil-

(MORE ON C2)



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www.smcinema.com

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Grand Winner

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Hannah Montana The Movie

METRO MANILA

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PODIUM

PUBLIC ENEMIES

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IMAX

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE

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MOVIEWORLD

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GALLERIA

1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 HARRY POTTER 6
3 IT'S ALIVE
4 PUBLIC ENEMIES
5 MY SISTER'S KEEPER
6 ICE AGE 3: (DIGITAL 3D) / HARRY POTTER 6
7 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
8 IndieSine: NAMETS / DCDE
9 HARRY POTTER 6 / ICE AGE 3
10 MANILA

ERMITA

1 MY SISTER'S KEEPER
2 IT'S ALIVE
3 HARRY POTTER 6
4 HARRY POTTER 6
5 PUBLIC ENEMIES
6 MANILA
7 ICE AGE 3 / TRANSFORMERS 2

METRO EAST

1 IT'S ALIVE
2 HARRY POTTER 6
3 HARRY POTTER 6
4 PUBLIC ENEMIES
5 ICE AGE 3
6 MY SISTER'S KEEPER
7 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
8 MANILA

NOVALICHES

1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 IT'S ALIVE
3 PUBLIC ENEMIES
4 HARRY POTTER 6

PIONEER

1 PUBLIC ENEMIES
2 HARRY POTTER 6
3 MY SISTER'S KEEPER
4 IT'S ALIVE

In a tiny village in a city by the bay, parents, superstitions and dark beliefs will not allow any exception to the rule of a particular family. However, pain is much safe breaking, as Jonas and Rosa, two young lovers, find their passion and are soon faced with a choice: to defy the world and be together, or to live apart. Set in the 1950's, against the backdrop of the colorful culture of Tangier, the bittersweet transformation of Salvador to an unforgettable love story, magically delivered. It takes a lover to choose between his family or love.

OPENS TOMORROW!!!
at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria indefinite

MOVIEWORLD

MOVIESINE FEATURED FILM

STA. ROSA

1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 HARRY POTTER 6
3 THE COFFIN
4 ECHELON CONSPIRACY

LIPA

1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 HARRY POTTER 6
3 THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123
4 THE COFFIN

DASMARIÑAS

1 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
2 THE COFFIN
3 HARRY POTTER 6
4 HARRY POTTER 6

IMUS

1 ECHELON CONSPIRACY
2 HARRY POTTER 6
3 HARRY POTTER 6
4 THE COFFIN

STARMILLS

1 ICE AGE 3
2 MANILA
3 VILLA ESTRELLA
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
5 HARRY POTTER 6
6 HARRY POTTER 6

ANGELES

1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 FROM WITHIN
3 TRANSFORMERS 2
4 HARRY POTTER 6

TACLOBAN

1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123
3 THE COFFIN

BACOLOD

1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123
3 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
4 HARRY POTTER 6
5 THE AMUSEMENT
6 VILLA ESTRELLA / TRANSFORMERS 2

ILOILO

1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 MOTHER OF TEARS
4 HARRY POTTER 6
5 VILLA ESTRELLA
6 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

Mang Truman's show

From page B1

just because it would require an annual PX trip from Manila to Orion — a journey that would take 17 days.

"I couldn't leave my office work as filmis-to-comedies," he said.

Fortunately, the shoot was set during Holy Week vacation and his schedule matched Arroyo's.

After finishing his job as director in the latest pilot "Marrit sa Galgos" for the Manila Mobile Theater Foundation in Sta. Ana, Mitos focused on "Tolentan."

Biggest challenge

"I didn't want to worry about other things while doing the movie," he says, especially since the biggest challenge was Eula's quiet nature. "I often had to react without saying anything."

He has it off with Borges. "At first, I thought he was formal and reserved, but he's also funny. Alfred's a pro. He was the first to break the ice."

Ballesteros didn't give the cast a moment's peek, so Mitos was pleasantly surprised when he finally saw it in full on the big screen at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. "I wept bonkers," said Mitos.

Bobbie Tan, chair of Cinemalaya's production and monitoring committee, calls Mitos's performance "touching. ... He made me cry in the last eight minutes of the film."

Cinemalaya begins its run in SM Jellman on July 24.

Erik Santos' new CD enters OPM chart

From page B1

tunes, Star Records; 31 "My Inspiration," Charice, Star Records; 41 "We Are 1," Kris Aquino & Baby James, Star Records; 50 "Addicted To Acoustic," Princess, Viva Music; 61 "The Jim Brickman Songbook," Jim Brickman, Star Records; 71 "Children's Rhymes & Lullabies," Sharon Cuneta, Ivory Music; 81 "Songs Rediscovered 2," Jed Madela, Universal Records; 91 "For You," Richard Poon, MCA Music; 100 "Cinemagimat," Jill E, Warner Music

Overall

1) "The Essential Michael Jackson," Sony Music; 21 "King of Pop (Philippine Edition)," Michael Jackson, Sony Music; 31 "Show Me Sign," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 41 "Gling Gling," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 51 "My Inspiration," Charice, Star Records; 61 "We Are 1," Kris Aquino & Baby James, Star Records; 71 "Addicted To Acoustic," Princess, Viva Music; 81 "Various Artists," Hannah Montana Movie Soundtrack, MCA Music; 91 "The Greatest Years," Michael Jackson & The Jackson 5, MCA Music; 101 "Dangerous," Michael Jackson, Sony Music

Boyz II Men back on the pop radar

By Tony M. Mogavero
Contributor

BOYZ II MEN, SAID to be the "most successful R&B male vocal group of all time," with five No. 1 hit singles between 1992-97 and more than 90 million albums sold, is on the comeback trail. Its last recording, 2007's "Motown: A Journey Through Hitsville USA," was ostensibly an effort to put the Boyz back into the pop radar.

Still popular

The disappointment of recent years — members leaving that reduced the group into a trio, plummeting CD sales, and a facile millionaire's shift in musical taste — were quite evident.

But the group was still popular here, with some 18,000 Filipino fans — mostly screaming girls with their significant others — trooping to the Araneta Coliseum last week to watch its concert.

A loud and banging funky number opened the show. Dressed in impeccable suits, Shawn Stockman, Wanya Morris and Nathan Morris asked the audience to dance out the group's name amid the discordant hiphop. The trio repeatedly exhorted that "Miracle, make some noise!" — and the crowd responded with shrieks and fist pumps.

Stockman then crooned the first verses to "Get Bended Knee," while Wanya and Nathan Morris just relaxed, by the way) belted out the chorus in call-and-response mode. They blended voices for the rest of the song to magnificent three-part harmony.

Those voices haven't changed, still melodious enough to recall a distant era when sweet soul music was the soundtrack of faithful horses amid drive-by shootings in America.

The trio pumped up the volume for a four-song run of Motown covers. Their hops and funky moves sneaking with fleet takes on Smokey Robinson and the Miracles' "Tracks of My Tears" and The Temptations' "(Just) My Imagination (Just Running Away with Me)."

They also did a right rue-through of The Four Tops' "Reach Out (I'll Be There)" with all the vim and brilliance of a veteran bay band.

Incidentally, the Boyz performed without backup musicians, so another close and conversational, the audience would have taken them to task for doing a mere karaoke show.

Then again, their slick dance routines, particularly those of brothers Wanya, more than offset the cold, almost mechanical feel of the '80s backing track tracks. Their moves, while rooted in street smarts, have thespian grace all over them. It was fun and thrilling to watch the three hunks leap in unison and in tune with the music, with practically no sweat.

Ballads

For the second part of the gig, the ballads came storming down. The endearing "I'll Make Love To You" and the ethereal "End of the Road" took their expected room, electrifying the lovelorn chosen from an enraptured crowd. The Boyz even gave away lamp-stemmed red roses while the large video screen showed a flower to the process of blooming.

Before launching into "A Song for Mama," Stockman requested the audience to open their cell phones and

BOYZ II Men 2009 (from L): Shawn Stockman, Nathan Morris, Wanya Morris

call out their love for their mothers. He then asked that the lights be dimmed. As the trio warbled their serenade, the Big Dome was dotted with the glow of thousands of phones that looked like giant fireflies.

The encore was on a rapper! As reprise of "It's So Hard to Say Goodbye to Yesterday," followed by a boisterous reprise of the opening number. Boyz II Men promised to return soon, after the release of two new albums due next year.

Opening act Sing and Play provided a pleasant diversion, turning off as a reasonable venue between Side A and South Border. The five-man crew tempered pre-show anticipation with pleasant Right Path covers, including a lounge appropriation of Eric Clapton's "Change the World."

Life's moods and melodies in Cynthia Alexander's live CD

By Kurt B. Reighley
Contributor

Cynthia Alexander
"Walk Down the Road" (Independently released)

The cover of singer-songwriter Cynthia Alexander's fourth album features a self-portrait that plays on her most prominent body part: Her big, eyes. But beyond the grand luster of the image, it's actually symbolic. Given the mood and lyrical richness of her songwriting, Alexander does have eyes that are big and sharp enough to see life's moods and melodies, as we know it.

Filipinos her fellow musician and elder brother Joey Ayala has sung about the lives of ordinary Filipinos, Alexander has explored the mood of the outdoor environment. Her three-minute "Sunset," especially a refined blend of folk, pop, rock and jazz — how! found her delving into life's

REVIEW

Yates pulls off difficult cinematic juggling act

RUPERT Grint, Emma Watson and Daniel Radcliffe in "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince"

ERICJUSTIALLY VIEWING THE "Harry Potter" film series has been practically a rite of passage for this film generation, but the installments on view thus far have been a decidedly mixed bag. As each new filmmaker puts his personal stylistic stamp on the "chapters" he brings, the cumulative story of the boy wizard (and pals) wreaked this way and that, with comic delivering or otherwise in terms of cinematic gold — or dross, decidedly dross.

Happily, however, the latest "Potter" installment, directed by **David Yates**, is also one of the film franchise's best, as are the nail-biting story hurdles it enjoyably manages to maneuver around, under or over with such finishing up.

Viewfinder

Jonathan C. Reyes

Title appointment as the scorching installments' final convention and storylines comes to the with, of three, as Harry and his friends once into their teenage years and mature as wizards. The director "understands" this shift well, sensitive and delightful scenes allow some time currently romantic or sexually curious, and viewers share the ambivalence things of pain and mood.

But Yates mostly makes sure that the imagination is still well-served by his movie, as when a spy table user introduces visual delight after another. Then does the director bring the film some sentence look in its magical beginning, before its every become yes dark and dire in other concessions' for those of those laughings.

And yet, Yates' style has to remind himself that the story is once required to achieve its denouement, as lord Voldemort's evil master plot has to be given its dark and dangerous due.

Quite certainly, Yates is able to pull off this difficult cinematic juggling act, affirming the soundness of the film series' producers' choice of him to run with the story up to its unpredictably momentous and brilliant conclusion.

Aside from Yates, this installment's most impressive participant is **Michael Gambon**, whose portrayal of Professor Dumbledore achieves nothing short of greatness in his final appearance in the story.

Key for pulling his Gambon from loaded by some of our theater colleagues in England as the best actor of his generation. His farewell performance as Dumbledore is subtle and restrained, but powerfully single-minded.

Without intending to, Gambon upstages his younger co-stars and shows them up for the relative rookies they are. Not to worry, however — Yates Dumbledore gotta, Harry and his young friends are sure to move into round form in the series' concluding "chapters," so they'll have their chances to steer their craft.

Search for Tesla bid

The Technical Educational and Skills Development Authority has opened its search for the "Tesla site." Twelve regional wineries who have completed at least one technical-vocational Tesla program will compete on the national level on Aug. 25, the Authority's 15th anniversary. There will be one national winner and three runners-up.

'Manifesto'

Blue 9 returns with another winning album, "Manifesto," under Tony Mortz. The compilation is about many political and social issues that affect our daily lives. Tracks for collaborators include Raymond Mantalgas ("Ibu-pwera"), Cookie Chua ("Tao") and Noel Cabangon ("Ikay na Ako").

DJ championship finals

The Philippine contenders for the 2009 DJ championship will be held at 8 p.m. on Aug. 9 at Stagework Training, Ilaw corner Ballance St., Mandaluyong City. The event will also launch DJ Academy.com, a one-of-a-kind school where DJ enthusiasts can learn the basics of DJing. Call 687-4371.

POWER PLANT CINEMAS

ROCKWELL CENTER MAKATI · TEL 898-9999

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE - DP 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00

MY SISTER'S KEEPER 1:15, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30

PUBLIC ENEMIES - R13 2:00, 5:00, 8:00

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE - DP 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE - DP 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

PUBLIC ENEMIES - R13 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 HARRY POTTER DP 12:00, 3:10, 6:20, 9:30

2 PUBLIC ENEMIES R-13 12:00, 3:10, 6:20, 9:30

3 HARRY POTTER DP 2:10, 5:20, 8:30

4 MY SISTER'S KEEPER PG-13 2:00, 4:25, 9:00, 9:15

PUBLIC ENEMIES R-13 2:40, 5:50, 9:00

Bhutan: The Land Shangri-La

Shangri-La Plaza

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE - DP 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30

PUBLIC ENEMIES - R-13 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

ULTRA 7

PRESIDENTIAL SUITE

RECLINER CHAIRS

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Walter Mart

The President's report card

CLICK!

YESTERDAY, PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO delivered her last State of the Nation address.

In her inaugural speech in 2004, the President laid her 10-point agenda as the flagship programs during her incumbency.

Has the President passed or failed?

"Inquirer's Numbercast" features a State of the Nation special episode tonight after the late night newscast "Isdat" on GMA-7.

Countdown to 2010

ABC will hold the "3rd Countdown to 2010" by the ABC Leadership Forum" today at 4th (2PM) Dolphy Theatre, in line with the network's "Bata Iris, Bilang Mo Ako ang Simula" campaign.

Senators Francis Escudero, Francis Pangilinan, Loren Legarda, Manuel Roxas II as well as Representative Gilberto Teodoro, Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio, and Interior and Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno were invited to give their own takes on the country's and countdown a day after President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's State of the Nation Address.

ABC also the event live at 7 p.m. via telephone on Radio 22 on Aug. 1 at 7 p.m. and on 9000 CBN Studio's Boot on Aug. 2 at 10:35 p.m.

Animated Saturdays

Carmen Soriano's latest original series, "The Secret Saturdays," airs on Saturdays at 11 a.m.

The series features the Saturdays, a family of world-saving scientists, who work to protect the earth from the hidden forces and artifacts that would hurtle or annihilate the world. Their adventures unveil from the scorching Gobi desert to the frozen Antarctic.

"Kidz TV" a live-action series featuring the talented and multi-faceted daughter Stephen Medrana, features a variety of sketch and tricks. The series reveals the secrets behind some of the newest magic tricks. It airs Saturdays at 6 a.m.

Gag show's new season

"Banana Split" enters its fourth season on MEG-CBN with more impolice Pangandaman and Jayson Gainza impersonations of Mo Aquino and Bet Mendiola, respectively, on "SNN" parody "MMN."

Originally conceptualized as the all-female version of the '90s hit show "Gala Bananas," "Banana Split" transformed into a fearless gag show in its third season.

The show also stars Zanjoe Marudo, Artoy Pardo, DR Bautista, Princess Ryan, Pooh and JoKoying.

It airs Saturday nights after "SOS."

PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

OPENS TOMORROW

The President of the United States has been shot.

There is a traitor among us.

"A SPELLBINDING THRILLER"

"AN INTELLIGENT, SHOCKING MOVIE"

"POWERFUL and GRIPPING... DO NOT DARE MISS THIS ONE"

Kate BECKINSALE

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

NOW SHOWING

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF 'THE NOTEBOOK'

AND BASED ON THE BEST-SELLING NOVEL BY JODI PICOULT

cameron diaz

my sister's keeper

Valerie Concepcion not ready for second love

VALERIE CONCEPCION HAS NO regrets about having a love child, Peanut, at 16.

"It changed my outlook in life," she says. "What I have to see is where people brand me as wasteful, just because I got pregguy as a young age. I was blindly in love, that's why I gave my heart and soul ..."

She no longer has any contact with the father of Peanut, Yuvienco, I'd send her also to send her child but for now of natutu siya kina kanap. She doesn't feel na may hating kasi kompleto naman ang love ng pamilya nya and I always love."

Isn't she ready to find a second dad for Peanut? "I miss the feeling of being crazy in love but I don't want to hasa it," she replies. "Di pa talaga nanatilili ulit ang puso ko the same way it did when I fell for Piolo's dad."

She admits dating cuge Jonathan Brotherston. "Dati and I are not on," she clarifies, "but we're getting there again. Takot lang ako kasi papers Angel Locsin beg daw ako na to love as basketball player."

Having a former NBA player as an ex-husband, I chide Val. "Di yuuh! Boss flare, kit that!"

Valerie's heart has been dabbled once. What it needs now is the winning dumb shot.

Celebrity trivia

Due to insistence readers' demon hasn't sworn trivia about celebs. Lito dulce, Jay man.

•Chaudine Barretto coat always have lip gloss on because she dreads remembering the time her lips got severely chapped when she accidentally hit an open bonus.

•Vilma Santos always holds a battle over a cue for fear that she might get electric shock again.

•If there's one thing Regine Velasquez hates, it's a sound system or an instrument that causes feedback when she's ready to do her number.

Favorite song

Kuntsa Fiddli's ex-BF Iris Lamentares would rather not confront Hayden Kho about the video sex scandal. "I opted to be the bigger man," he says.

"Besides, I don't think it's worth my time and attention."

He and Katrina reunited the following Cuenca "Whisper" dance exhibition together. What an uncanny coincidence that the first couple of this new affair is the same song that Kris and Hayden's dirty dance to.

Did that have a good or bad effect on his chronic ulcer? "Both positive and negative," he quips. "I just want to silently say congratulations sing na 'Careless Whisper' dito ang isa sa mga kanta ko. Malaking sumpa ulcer ni Kat na it's one of my best songs. My ulcer's dad long been wounded before the scandal broke out.

Will he take Kat back especially now that she needs a knight in shining armor? "I'm still clueless what to say," he says. "But Kat knows I'll always be here to support her."

Same girl, same song, different feeling.

Thanks to Black

Princess Velasco, the ex-GF of Herbert "Bistek" del Rosario and who had a spat with his love friend Hayden Kho, was a guest on my Vivi Cinema Channel daily show "Step, Talk & Listen."

She requested not to be asked about the issue that Bistek and Hayden fought because of her, which supposedly led to the sex video leakage. Princess just wanted to promote her acoustic album which includes a thank you message to Bistek and his family — though she claims that they have split up.

Is she really a princess without a prince?

Guess list

•A singer/actor is super jealous of the budding friendship between two southern chicks. "Magkakausap si singer/pop icons bachelorette eh sa Wednesday [...]. Di siya natuwa sa akin sa ngayon at MU 3 kay MU 2," reveals a network insider. "May dalos sa relasyon kasi sila." Inaabisuhan daw sa kanya!

•An actress got stranded on the set of her show's taping when she found out that she had arrived to late to the extra bfast sa the crowd's. What the smoke is food for thought about attitude management.

•An actress was spotted shopping at the store's section of a department store. A colleague asked her for whom sana she buying stuff for. Without batting an eyelash, she retorted that it was for her ex-BF, an actor. She has gotten him out of her system but not from her shopping list.

Scary movie

Catch the highly acclaimed scary movie "Paraguas" at the Cinema of the Robinsons Galleria from July 29 to Aug. 4.

The Cinema One Original movie by award-winning writer-director Richard Somes stars Jessica Lanuza, Joel Torre and Soledad Aglugub and is directed Abbey Montaño.

E-mail sweetgirlsdiary@yahoo.com

VALERIE Concepcion and Diddy Pierre

DID YOU KNOW...

Jackson tribute

VIENNA—Michael Jackson was a "wonderful humanitarian" who considered it important to reach out and help others, his brother said Friday.

Jermaine Jackson also said the King of Pop's "whole existence" was to find the good in everyone and showered his co-reported death on June 25 at age 50 as a "tragic loss."

"At work or my brother achieved in the music industry, he was a wonderful human being and a wonderful humanitarian," Jackson said.

"My brother, he was until ensured in just knowing what was most important and that's giving back ... to make the world a much better place."

Charity concerts

Jackson said his brother donated the proceeds of many of his concert tours to charity and said there were "pages and pages and pages" filled with examples of his humanitarian work.

Jackson spoke at a news conference in the downtown capital just hours before he was to attend a gala paying tribute to Michael Jackson's charity efforts.

Actress Andie MacDowell, who will host the evening event, said she has admired Michael Jackson since she was young.

"I have been a huge fan of Michael Jackson's since I was a child and had posters of all the Jacksons on my wall ... I just feel very honored to facilitate and participate in these awards," she said.